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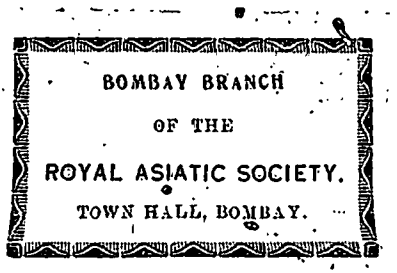

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THE EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE OF THE RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE AND DR. FRENCH LAURENCE.

PUBLISHED FROM

THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

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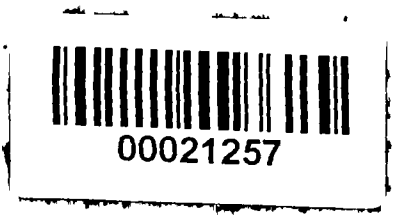
PRINTED FOR C. AND J. RIVINGTON,
NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, AND NO. 3, WATERLOO-PLACE,
PALL-MALL.

M.DCCC.XXVII.



Luke Hansard & Sons,
near Lincoln's-Inn Fields, London.

PREFACE.

THE name of EDMUND BURKE has been so long and so justly celebrated, that to publish any authentic correspondence of that distinguished Statesman must be alone sufficient to recommend it. The Correspondence which is now made public, took place towards the conclusion of his life, at the momentous æra of the French Revolution, the termination of which Providence did not permit him to behold; and it was carried on with one, whom he had selected, as the associate of his labours, and the depositary of his most secret thoughts.

A Life of Mr. Burke has been lately given to the world, scanty indeed in point of materials, but written with precision and impartiality. Dr. Laurence was himself engaged in the same undertaking; but he did not leave behind him any important materials for his projected work; for the history of no common man, whose talents, judgement, and intrepidity gave a colour to the events of no common period.

The intimate friendship between Mr. Burke and Dr. Laurence commenced with the trial of Mr. Hastings. When that friendship was duly cemented, the former took no literary or political step without consulting the latter, who entered into all his views, and assisted in all his undertakings, with warmth and sincerity. The celebrated work, entitled "Reflexions on "the Revolution in France," was communicated to Dr. Laurence, as it was from time to time composed; and was submitted to his revision. The public acknowledgement of a similar revision was made in the following Advertisement prefixed to the second edition of "An Appeal "from the Old to the New Whigs:" "There "are some corrections in this edition, which "tend to render the sense less obscure in one "or two places. The order of the two last "members is also changed, and I believe for "the better. This change was made on the "suggestion of a very learned person, *to the "partiality of whose friendship I owe much; to "the severity of whose judgement I owe more.*"

An opinion prevailed, when this second edition appeared, that the very learned person here alluded to was Mr. Windham; but the Editor remembers to have heard Mr. Burke himself, when the mistake was mentioned to him, with a smile and a joke, correct it; for Mr. Windham had not at that time combated with Mr.

Burke, as he afterwards did, heart and hand, against the terrific spirit of Jacobinism. He was even suspected by his illustrious friend as being a little tinctured with French principles. The fact however perhaps only was, that he did not, at so early a period, and in so strong a point of view, perceive their alarming tendency—but, with the exception of Laurence, who indeed did?

What harmony of political feeling existed between the two persons, whose Correspondence is now first given to the public, that Correspondence itself will best shew. To the one, whose name can only perish with the records of his country, the Editor would be justly censured, were he, in the scanty limits of a preface, to attempt more than a bare allusion; but of the other, he hopes that he may with propriety give a brief memoir; of a Scholar and a Statesman, whom through life he loved and admired, and with whom he was connected by the closest ties of friendship and affection.

Dr. FRENCH LAURENCE was born 3d April 1757. He was the eldest son of Mr. Richard Laurence, a tradesman, and a member of the Corporation, at Bath, highly esteemed as a man of talent and integrity. Both his parents were natives of Warminster in Wiltshire. His grandfather by the father's side was an attorney; his grandfather by the mother's side, whose name

was French, a clothier, in that town.* The family of Laurence came from Lancashire; that of French from the county of Galway in Ireland.

* *An Account of the extraordinary Conversion of Mr. John French; by Mr. Rogers, then Vicar of Warminster. In a Letter to the Bishop of Salisbury.*

"Upon my first being placed in this large and populous parish by Bishop Sherlock, it was not only my duty, but at the same time, my pleasure, to get acquainted with, and be informed of, the characters, dispositions, and opinions of those, whom I was sent to instruct.—Among them, I soon found a gentleman, much respected for his sense and understanding, (Mr. John French) and looked upon as an oracle within the circle of his acquaintance. He was tolerably well skilled in the mathematics, and read the Classics with ease. 'Twas very rare, and somewhat extraordinary must have happened, if ever he neglected attending church on Sundays. He always brought with him his Greek Testament, in which he read with the minister the several portions of Scripture, as they were appointed. But I soon learnt, that all his friends held him to be a rank Deist, and quickly discovered, that at church the One Supreme God was the sole object of his faith and worship—for whenever the "Gloria Patri" was said or sung, I could not but observe his inattention, by wiping his spectacles, shutting his book, gazing about him, or the like. The same was observable at the repeating of either of the Creeds. He was, however, always decent, and whatever were his particular notions, he never troubled the world with them. I lived with him in strict harmony and friendship many years, almost eighteen. He had many moral excellencies—was, in particular, very charitable, and much beloved by the poor. He would never enter on any religious points, and if at any time they happened to be started, was generally silent, or, at the most, said but little. We styled him "the Philoso-

He was educated at Winchester College, under Dr. Joseph Warton, and there exhibited

pher," a character he much affected, both in his garb and carriage, being altogether careless in the one, and not a little unpolished in the other. About six months since, his health began to be impaired, and his decline seemed to be coming on apace. I watched every opportunity to get at his religious notions, and instil others. Unhappily for him, he was too reserved (as he afterwards confessed); nor could he venture to open his mind to me, when he could not but know that his end was drawing near. The Monday before he died on the Friday following, I went to see him, purposely to lay hold on any favorable opportunity that might then offer of my inculcating the necessity, and importance of Faith. But I left him, as I found him, fully convinced in my own mind, that he was resolved to leave the world in the faith of those principles he had embraced, whatever they were, without communicating them to me or any one else. I did not, however, think his time so very near as it afterwards proved, for he walked out, and dined abroad the next day, and "better" was his reply to all who kindly asked how he was. On the Thursday following, in the afternoon, as I was visiting another sick person, three messengers came after me, on the heels of each other, to hasten me to him. They all urged he was impatient to see me immediately. I soon went, and found him sitting by his fire, in his chair, as usual. He thanked me for coming, hoped it was not inconvenient, and then calmly desired me, to do my office by him. I asked him what part? His answer was, to administer to him the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This gave me the opportunity I had long wished for: I immediately put the following question to him, viz. whether he renounced those principles he must know himself to be charged with; of which, too, he could not suppose me to be ignorant; and whether he embraced the faith of a crucified Saviour, Jesus, through whom alone

proofs of very early genius. In the month of March 1773, before he had quite completed his

he could be saved? With a becoming warmth, he replied, "*I do.*" And with indignation he added, that he renounced and abhorred those principles, that had, all his days, misled him—withal reflecting on the folly and unhappy circumstances of those, who build their hopes of security on the moral fitness of things. "In proof of my sincerity, "look there, Sir," says he, pointing to the fire, "You see "the ashes of two books, not quite consumed. They are "the remains of two, that have helped to mislead me, "("Woolston against the Miracles," and a volume of "Deistical Tracts): I intended to have burnt them before "you, as a mark of my sincerity, but was impatient with "resentment against their contents, and will, if it please "God I ever get to my closet again, where are more of "the same stamp, burn the remainder." Thus upon the fall of Deism, an opening was given me to implant the saving truths of the Gospel. To inculcate its truths, indeed was needless: he had read, heard, and fully remembered them; and to enforce them in their spiritual sense, here the grace of God prevented me; for I had no sooner attempted it, than he freely acknowledged, that he had found and felt the power of the gospel of Christ unto salvation. He found, he said, all other schemes ineffectual, and the Gospel alone efficacious to his comfort and support. He then witnessed, *as to Place* and *Posture*, wherein it pleased God to illuminate his understanding, to embrace those saving truths he had long rejected, and he rejoiced in the light thereof. Here again, he repeated his earnest desire of being made partaker of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, joining issue with me in one great truth, which he remembered oftimes to have heard me inculcate from the pulpit—That no true, sincere Christian could ever abstain from that ordinance, and which he promised never to neglect again, (as he hoped in sincerity) if it were God's will to give him life, which

sixteenth year, his father died. It appears, however, from the following passage in a letter

he did not expect. More passed, much to the same purpose; In fine, my answer was (not apprehending his end to be so very near) that the morning was the best time for such an act of faith, when, if he persevered in the same pious and devout frame of mind, I would attend him early. So I left him for that night, after having commended him in prayer to God. Friday morning, at nine o'clock, I accordingly attended him, not a little surprized to find him so weak, as to be unable to rise out of his bed; I found him, however, quite composed, much rejoiced to see me, and full of the same good thoughts I had left him in the night before, still earnestly desirous of receiving, what he had all his days rejected. I then administered to him the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he received with all the outward marks of faith and devotion, and, as he was pleased to tell me, with the highest satisfaction and comfort. Being engaged to visit, and to do the same office by another sick person, the same morning, I soon left him to God and his own thoughts—With a promise to call upon him morning and evening, as long as he lived—But I saw him no more, for about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, after having said to those about him, he thought he should not live to see me fulfil the kind promise I had made him, he expired without a groan.

Such was the conversion of Mr. John French, justly, I think, so called, beyond many modern ones the world has of late been made acquainted with: a marvellous work of God, as it must be acknowledged to have been. To Him be the glory given, and may a like degree of light break in upon the hearts of all others, who are as yet in unbelief, that they may all be brought to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jesus."

"October, 1760."

The Editor, anxious that so valuable a document as the preceding letter should not be lost to the public, has given it a place here.

from his father to him, while at Winchester School (without a date,) and which is now in the Editor's possession, that he had written an Ode, worth criticism, even at that very early age. "As to your Ode," his father tells him; "I think the part which relates to Shakespear "the best. Some of that I think may be called "fine; so is the former part, which relates to "Spenser, till you enter on his Allegorical "Romance, which is only a bare recital, with-"out entering into the beautiful description and "poetical imagery of the author. The lines "on Milton are animated; but I wished you "had joined some specimens of the tender "and pathetic, to those which you gave us of "War and Uproar. They are to be found in "him. Don't let this discourage you. You "desired me to be particular, and perhaps "I may have been too rigid. However my "opinion of it on the whole is, that it is a much "better poem than I could have expected from "you, and superior to Mr. Garrick's Ode on "Shakespear."

Shortly perhaps after the Ode alluded to was written, he composed another, upon the subject of the aërial Beings of Shakespear, which was given up as a school exercise at Winchester in the same year in which his father died, (1773.) Of this, Dr. Warton, in a letter to Dr. Laurence, dated 13th June 1799, thus speaks: "I was not forgetful of the promise I made

" you to communicate to you the *first copy*
" of your Ode on Shakespear; which I prize
" highly as an early proof of true genius, and
" from which I should not part and deliver
" into any other hands but those of the author."

Possessing a transcript of this first copy communicated to him by his old and revered master, Dr. Warton, at that time retired from the cares of a public school, and resident at Wickham, in Hampshire, I here give it verbatim according to that copy, as at least a literary curiosity,—and what so good a judge as Dr. J. Warton justly deemed " an early proof of true genius."

ODE

ON THE

WITCHES AND FAIRIES OF SHAKESPEAR.

STROPHE I.

O GUARDIAN of that sacred land,
Where Avon's wood-crowned waters stray;
Thou, whose all-powerful magic wand
The thronged ideal train obey;
Who dartest on swift eagle-wings
Beyond * the flaming bound of things;
O Fancy, hear. 'Tis thine alone,
Fast by the Lyric Muse,
Her listening Offspring to inspire,
And, ere they strike Apollo's golden lyre,
In their big breasts to pour Castalia's genuine dews.

* Flammantia mœnia mundi. *Lucret.*

Antistrophe I.

Deem not my lips profane would praise
A Name unknown to thy chaste ear:
No. Shakespear now demands my lays,
Shakespear, to thee, to Phœbus dear.
And O! how at that mighty name
My swelling breast hath caught the flame.
Come then, O Fancy, bend thy bow,
With me the Muse's arrows throw,
At Avon's favoured streams;
For there full oft thy secret feet
Nightly have trod, thy darling Son to meet,
And wave before his eye thy gayly-glittering dreams.

Epode I.

At Shakespear's happy birth,
With fire æthereal Jove his soul endowed;
Then bade him spurn the narrow bounds of Earth,
And sordid wishes of the groveling crowd,
That chain the free-born mind. "And take," he said,
"This sacred charge, O Fancy; to his sight,
"Glancing in all their colours, be displayed
"The airy forms that sport in thy pure fields of light,
"For his vast mind, with innate wisdom fraught,
"Beyond what taught
"The bards of yore
"Thy trackless regions boldly shall explore,
"I guiding. Thus, O Goddess, have I sworn;
"And now is come the fated hour;
"Earth now shall see, and own thy power,
"Forth beaming in thy Son. Be Shakespear born."

Strophe II.

So spake the God. With eager joy
Thou didst prevent his high behest,
And, gazing on the immortal Boy,
Thrice snatch him fondly to thy breast;
Then rushing from the heavenly height
The winds to Avon bore thy flight.
There in old Arden's* inmost shade
Far from the Sun, thy Spirits laid
The Heaven-entrusted Child;
And, as before his purged eyes
Thou badest oft their sportive train arise,
With silence fixed he saw, looked up to thee and smiled.

Antistrophe II.

Thy hand his youthful footsteps led
Beneath the pale Moon's beam serene,
Where, tripping light with wanton tread,
† The Fairies marked the mazy green;
While some the blighting cankers kill,
Some drive the clamorous Owl away,
That nightly wonders at their play;
Some pant in nobler war
To invade the hostile Rear-mice crew,
And sheathed in glittering arms of filmy dew,
Their spears of thorn erect round Oberon's nutshell car.

* Arden. The old name for the woodland part of Warwickshire, which the Avon divides from the feldon or champaigne part.

† Vide the Midsummer Night's Dream.

Epode II.

But oh! what sudden gloom,
What horror overcasts the lowering day?
How yawns that shagged Cave, whose dreary womb
Ne'er felt the genial Sun's enlivening ray,
Black, noisome, cheerless! Lo! how all around
With feeble cries the gliding Spectres throng!
Hark! how I hear with hollow tremulous sound,
The solemn-muttered Spell, and horrid magic Song!
Save me! what withered forms my soul affright!
By the pale light
Of yon blue fire,
I know their scowling fronts, their wild attire.
See through the glimmering darkness of the cave,
By Padoke warned, their rites they sing,
And slowly walk in dismal ring
Around the charmed Cauldron's bubbling wave!

Strophe III.

What howling Whirlwinds rend the sky!
How shakes that ivy-mantled Tower!
The conscious Sun turns back his eye,
And Nature, trembling, owns their power.
For whom at yonder livid flame
Do ye the deed without a name?
Ye secret Hags, whence breathes this sound?
Why sinks that cauldron in the ground?
Why do these thunders roll?
Tell me, what means that armed head?
Why comes that bloody Child?—The Hags are fled;
They vanished into air.—Amazement wrung my soul.

Antistrophe III.

Whither, ye Beldames, do ye roam?
Love ye wild Lapland's gothic night?
None now shall tread that cavern's gloom,
Nor spy your dreadful mystic rite.
None now shall see, in yonder plain,
The gambols of Titania's train.
* No more the Elves with printless pace
The Ocean's ebbing waters chase,
Or fly the swelling tide;
† Nor over the wide-watered shore
Sit, listening to the Curfew's sullen roar;
Nor nightly mushrooms make along the mountain's side.

Epode III.

Ariel! who sees thee now
Upon the Bat's wing sail along the sky?
Who sees thee sit upon the blossomed bough,
Bask on the rose, or in the cowslips lie?
No more shalt thou upon the sharp north run,
Or pierce into the earth, or tread the main;
No more with clouds bedim the mid-day Sun,
Or fire the angry bolts, or pour the rattling rain.
For who can wield like Shakespear's skilful hand
That magic wand,
Whose potent sway
The Elves of Earth and Air and Sea obey?

* Vide The Tempest.
† Vide Milton's Il Penseroso.

Yet, Fancy, once again on Britain smile;
Yet chuse some favourite Son again
O'er all thy boundless realms to reign:
O! give another Shakespear to our Isle!

This Ode he afterwards, while yet a youth, corrected and enlarged; when it was set to music by Lindley, the father-in-law of Sheridan, and performed as an Oratorio in London; a compliment, which, while it flattered his feelings, contributed not a little to extend the admiration of his poetical talents.

But this was not the only production by which he was distinguished, while he was still a boy at school. The death of his father deeply affected him; of a father who had loved him with the tenderest affection, had marked with pride the early energies of his mind, and had treated him, almost from infancy, more like a man than a child. While the impression caused by that melancholy event hung heavy on his soul, he composed an Elegy upon the subject, which, in point of feeling and expression, would not have disgraced a poet of maturer years.

ELEGY

ON THE

DEATH OF A FATHER.

WE must submit.—Why, then, with grief oppress,
Why sinks my soul beneath her load of woe?
The voice of Wisdom cannot calm this breast,
Nor dry these tears, which Nature bids flow.

All-fostering Sun! vain is thy genial power;
Thou shinest but for him from sorrow free.
In vain Spring paints each blooming fragrant flower,
Their bloom, their fragrance, all is lost to me.

Ye dear Companions of my sports, with you
How late I mixed, as thoughtless and as gay!—
Vain sports, that charmed my happier hours, adieu!
Adieu, ye fields, where once I loved to stray!

Ah me! then all was joy. Yon echoing mead
Beheld me foremost of the youthful train;
Each pleasing toil yon hill beheld me lead.—
When, when, blest days, will ye return again?

I now must weep amid the lonely woods,
Which ne'er the hateful eye of day pervades;
Where sadly-silent Melancholy broods,
" Breathing a browner horror on the shades."

* Quando, quando tales
Redibunt oculis meis sopores?
† Pope's Eloisa to Abelard.

O may no foot intruding mark this place!
Leave me, here leave me, to enjoy my grief!
For He is lost. Oh, wretched orphan race!
Oh, heavy loss! oh, wound beyond relief!

Thou best of Fathers! Where, ah! where was I,
When on thee fell the ruthless arm of Death?
Why, why did Heaven this little boon deny,
Thine eyes to close, and catch thy struggling breath?

Why did not I embrace thy limbs, yet warm,
And follow with slow steps thy mournful bier?
Why did not I the last sad rites perform,
And o'er thy grave indulge the pious tear?

Hadst thou no parting kind farewell to give,
When o'er thy face a Wife distracted hung?
Hadst thou no blessing on thy race to leave?
Cruel Disease! why didst thou chain his tongue?

Cruel Disease! And am I left behind?
Why do I call on thee, O Death, in vain?
What is life now? What can this aching mind
Of joy or solace feel? All here is pain.

When absent long, with many a fond caress,
My raptured Mother looks away her care;
When round with eager love my Brothers press;
Now shall I meet that love? Thou art not there.

In vain round every scene my eyes I roll,
Scenes, that could once wake transports in my heart;
They but recall thy image to my soul,
While from my eyes the tears unbidden start.

No more can Bath with all her pleasures charm;
No more the waving fields, the verdant lawn,
The distant-lowing herds, the cultured farm,
One cheerful thought can raise;—for Thou art gone!

In serious converse joined, * the mountain path,
Where fed the pendulous flocks, full oft we wore,
And, as we trod the flowery vale beneath,
Thy tongue oft formed my mind to Virtue's lore:

And art thou dead? Who shall direct my youth?
Who my rash feet from Pleasure's snares defend?
Who shall point out the winding paths of Truth,
Like thee, my guide, my guardian, Father, Friend?

And art thou dead? O! to what friend sincere
Shall thy defenceless orphan Children fly?
Who shall protect them? Who shall wipe the tear
That streams unceasing from Affliction's eye?

To Thee alone we look, thou Sire of all!
'Tis thine to shield the helpless orphan's head;
'Tis thine to listen to affliction's call,
And on our wounds the balm of Comfort shed.

At the age of seventeen he was elected to a scholarship of Corpus Christi College in the University of Oxford, which he reluctantly continued to retain, in compliance with the earnest solicitations of his friends, when he might have been subsequently admitted to a fellowship of New College, the pride and delight of every

* The hill joining to Claverton Down, where the late Ralph Allen, Esq. built the shell of a Castle.

Wykehamist. He was originally intended for the church; in which profession it was supposed, that Corpus afforded a better prospect of preferment than New College. He did not however take orders; and consequently, according to the statutes of his College, was obliged to relinquish his prospects at Corpus, when he became, in the course of succession, an actual Fellow.[21]

His connexions in Oxford were extensive; and these, after he had taken his Master's degree, naturally attracted him, with little importunity, to the great mart of pleasure and talent, the Metropolis. There he soon turned his thoughts to the study of the law; and with that view took chambers in the Middle Temple. It was at this period, that embarking in politics, and connecting himself with the friends of Mr. Fox,* he employed his poetical talents in the service of that party, to which he was attached; and became a writer in the Rolliad, Probationary Odes, and other fugitive productions of the day. Most of those hasty compositions, which originally appeared in newspapers, he collected; and having corrected them with the

* Mr. Fox's flattering opinion of him was once communicated to him, in the hearing of the Editor, by Sir Joshua Reynolds.—"Fox remarked," said Sir Joshua, "that you were one of the most extraordinary men he ever "knew; alluding, I suppose," added Sir Joshua with a smile, when he saw the effect upon Dr. L.'s countenance, "to your great size and gigantic exertions."

consent of their respective authors, published them in distinct pamphlets. The Editor possesses a complete copy of these pamphlets, bound together and presented to him by Dr. Laurence, who added to every paper, in his own hand-writing, the initials of its author's name, with occasional remarks.* Tickell, the brother-in-law of Sheridan, appears to have been a considerable contributor to the collection.

But the impeachment of Mr. Hastings first brought him into public notice. He was appointed by the House of Commons, in conjunction with Sir William Scott, Counsel to the Managers in the prosecution of that impeachment. For he had now abandoned the study of the common law, and applied himself wholly to that of the civil, having taken the degree of Doctor of Laws in the University of Oxford. And such was the high reputation, in which his talents were held, that he was appointed Counsel to the Managers, even during what is technically termed "the year of silence;" that is, during the year immediately succeeding his

* From this volume (containing the eighth edition of the Criticisms on the Rolliad) it appears that Dr. Laurence contributed the following papers: The Advertisements and Dedication of the Rolliad—In the first part of that work, Numbers III. VI. VII. VIII. XIII. XIV.—In the second part, the concluding number VII. only—In the Probationary Odes, numbers XVI. and XXI.—And of the Political Eclogues the first only, entitled "Rose; or the Complaint."

admission into the College of Doctors Commons. Although therefore he could not plead, when first appointed, he was permitted to act in the capacity of Chamber Counsel to the Conductors of the Impeachment.

How ably he discharged the honourable office thus committed to him, and how duly his conduct in it was appreciated, may be collected from a debate in the House of Commons, which took place on the sixth of June, in the year 1788. A doubt having been then expressed respecting the necessity of employing two Civilians, Mr. Fox replied, "that the nature of the cause rendered "their assistance peculiary necessary; and that "one of the gentlemen (meaning Dr. Laurence) "was *most eminently useful*, not because he ex- "celled the other in ability, assiduity, or pro- "fessional skill, but for his *deep and perfect* "*knowledge of the subject.*"

From this period his friendship with Burke became daily more and more cemented,—who adopted one of the charges against Mr. Hastings, drawn up by him, and presented it to the House of Commons. With a copy of these Charges, printed in the year 1786, he sent a letter to a relation, which contained the following post-script—"By my brother I send you a copy of "the Charges against Mr. Hastings, and his "defence. The last charge, No. XXII., was "wholly drawn up by me. I assure you, on

" the word of a man of honour, there is not " a syllable of any importance in any of the " Charges, which I do not, on the most mature " information and reflexion, believe to be strictly " true; nor is there a point in the defence, " which is not either *fallacious* or *false*." These " are very strong assertions, but very delibe- " rately and conscientiously formed."

In consequence of the credit he obtained by the trust, which the House of Commons reposed in him during this memorable impeachment, his professional employment at the civil law bar so rapidly increased, as to leave him very little time for literary pursuits. His intervals of leisure were usually spent at Beaconsfield; where he experienced, from every part of the Burke family, an attention and attachment, which, had he been united to them by the ties of blood, as well as of friendship, could scarcely have been exceeded.

In the year 1794, Mr. Burke retired from Parliament, and was succeeded in the borough of Malton by his son Richard, who was then evidently declining in health, and even hastening to the grave, in the eyes of all, but those of an anxious father. Shortly indeed afterwards, on the second of August in the same year, his Son died. How deeply he lamented the loss, how eloquently and how elegantly, I had almost said how doatingly, that lamentation was expressed

in his subsequent publications, the world cannot have forgotten. But amidst all his mental sufferings, sufferings, which admitted not relief, and which refused consolation, he was solicitous to have his friend Laurence for his Son's successor in Parliament. This arrangement however did not take place; but the negotiation served at least to alleviate his misery by averting his mind from the constant contemplation of the irreparable loss, which he had sustained. Indeed he seems to have struggled with his feelings, during the deepest paroxysms of his grief, in other ways; for in a copy of *Hamilton's Hedaya*,* presented by him to Dr. Laurence, and now deposited in the Bodleian Library, appears the following Inscription in his own hand-writing:

"These Volumes, given to me by Mr. Dun-
" das, I humbly beg may be accepted by
" my worthy friend and fellow-labourer, Dr.
" French Lawrence, all my publick cares and
" studies being now at an end. *This unfortu-*
" *nate August* 1794. There is a great power
" of mind, and a very subtle jurisprudence
" shewn in this Work.

" EDM. BURKE."

Although Dr. Laurence was not advanced upon this occasion to a seat in Parliament, yet it was not long before that object, which his

* Title-page, vol. i. Laurence is spelt Lawrence.

friend perhaps had more at heart than himself, was attained.* In 1796 he was elected Member for Peterborough; a seat which he retained to the day of his death. From this time their epistolary correspondence became more frequent, in consequence of the share, which Dr. Laurence then took in legislative debate, and the importance of political occurrences. But the heart of Burke, torn and distracted by the loss of his only Child, and agitated to excess by, what he conceived to be, the irremediable calamity of public affairs, soon after ceased to beat. He died in the month of July 1797.

Dr. Laurence was now left to regulate his opinions and conduct by the details of his own private judgement, deprived of that talent, principle, and experience, which he had hitherto invariably consulted, and which he had found his surest guide through the political gloom, with which this Country was then upon every side surrounded. Yet he was not altogether alone; for Windham, who participated with him in the public feelings and private friendship of Burke, still remained, and indeed, but alas, for how short a period! survived him.

For sometime previous to his death, the great change in his appearance indicated, that a

* From the letters which passed upon this subject, it will be seen, that Dr. Laurence's election to Parliament was not only promoted by Mr. Burke himself, but that it was the last anxious wish of his dying Son.

serious malady was undermining his constitution; and an oppression on his chest seemed to point out the formation of water. When on a short visit to one of his brothers at Eltham in Kent, February 1809, he was suddenly attacked after dinner with something like apoplexy, which terminated fatally in a few hours.

In concluding this short Memoir of Dr. Laurence, the Editor makes no attempt to delineate his personal character; to describe his private virtues and public principles; or to dwell upon the quickness of his conception, the depth of his research, and the accuracy of his judgement; persuaded that no higher encomium can be conferred upon him, than by simply stating, that he was the last and dearest friend of Edmund Burke. It may however be proper here to add the account, which a very able and less partial judge gave of his first speech in Parliament. In a letter to Sir E. Nagle, Mr. Windham thus panegyrizes it:—"Dr. Laurence's first perform-" ance, you may tell Mr. Burke succeeded per-" fectly well. He keeled a little in the launch-" ing, which gave me some minutes anxiety. " But he soon righted, when he touched the " water, and shewed, as he is, a grand first " rate." Nor is it possible to pass by unnoticed the following high testimony borne to his talents and literature in a recent publication of Lord Holland, addressed to the Warden of New College, Oxford, in which he is termed "one of

"the most learned, upright, and able men that
"ever enlightened the profession to which he
"belonged; or ever supplied his contempo-
"raries in public life with useful knowledge
"and wisdom, from the stores of a retentive
"memory and comprehensive understanding."

LETTERS

BETWEEN

DR. LAURENCE AND MR. BURKE.

TO MR. BURKE.

DEAR SIR, Thursday, July 24th, 1788.

I HAVE to inform you, that on the day, when I last wrote to you, we ended with a reduced majority of 40; yesterday, Lord Hood gained a majority of 151 on the whole poll; but what kept up my spirits was this, that Mr. Pitt in his defence of the scrutiny never even *charged* such numbers of his favourite *men of straw* against us, as he and his friend Lord Hood *have actually polled*, from Houndsditch, Wapping, and the parts of Chelsea not in Westminster. The Sailors were yesterday very well beaten again in the neighbourhood of the Garden; but have in different parts of the outskirts of Westminster waylaid and knocked down single persons, or small parties peaceably passing along the streets with Townshend's cockades: They have also paraded the streets in large bodies, intimidating those, whom they did not injure. Another thing, which had a great effect on the common people, was the circulation of an infamous libel

against Lord John, about the prosecution of his late butler. He was said to be prosecuted for a *bottle of wine*, which he stole for his wife, then lying-in. The truth was, he secreted a letter containing a bank-note of twenty-five guineas; but missing other things, Lord John procured a search-warrant, and found a large quantity of his wine, which he never suspected to have been taken. Lord John prosecuted the man for the trifling theft, instead of capitally for the detention of the bank-bill; and this *humanity* is imputed to him as *inhumanity*. It is this day contradicted in the papers; and I doubt not the contradiction will operate powerfully in our favour. Lord Hood, at the close of yesterday's poll, animated his friends to exertion this day, in order to put *an end to the contest*. We know therefore that to-day he did all he could, and about two o'clock we were 50 or 60 a-head on this day's poll; from that time they have obstructed our voters, who were many of them obliged to go away, but gave their promises to return to-morrow, and, dissatisfied at the conduct of our opponents, to bring their friends with them. We have several considerable bodies for to-morrow, and as we are canvassing now very actively in every part, shall draw forth very many single voters, who waited only to be canvassed by noblemen and gentlemen in form.—I attend myself the whole morning at the King's Arms, Compton-street, for St. Anne's parish; and the whole evening

I am employed in canvassing.—I draw a very good omen from the streets which I have canvassed, for almost all, who are for *Hood*, have voted; most of our friends, whom I have found to be the majority where I have been, have not yet polled.—Half an hour since, we were 12 a-head on to-day's poll, notwithstanding all their efforts, both to bring forward their own, and to obstruct our voters. Garrow sent me a message, that he is very well contented with the appearance of the day; and I, from what I know in our committee, do not fear success.—I have just heard, that the poll is now closed, and our majority encreased, one account says to 30, and another to 50, upon the day's poll. If I get any certain intelligence before the post hour, I will inform you more accurately.—Pitt certainly was canvassing; it was matter of public notoriety. He was also canvassing more privately on this day se'nnight. He has therefore committed himself fully, and brought his influence and the merits of his administration to a decided issue in this contest; and I trust and believe, it will terminate against him.... I have just heard our majority is 28, which leaves *Hood* but a majority of 123.

I am, dear Sir,
Most devotedly and sincerely
Yours ever,

My best compliments to Mrs. Burke, &c. &c.

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, London, August 16th, 1788.

It has long been my hope and my consolation, that I might before this have been able to return to Beaconsfield; but I have been repeatedly mortified, not only with finding that impossible, but with finding at the same time that my stay here is of little utility: such are the indolence, procrastination, and want of system, in our friends.—I had at length purposed to come to you, at all events, this very day; when I was again obliged to postpone my visit, in consequence of the arrival of half a buck for the St. Anne's committee; and I am, I believe, the only person in town to meet such of the Parishioners, as we have thought proper to invite; and to settle with them, what is absolutely necessary to our future success in the parish, a Parochial Club, to assemble once a month during every session of Parliament. We are to have our venison on Monday, at six shillings a head, wine included. I know, that it would be of infinite importance to our future objects, if you could make it convenient to attend. — You are *praised in Mrs. Wells's papers* day after day, for having *washed your hands* (as they elegantly phrase it) of the late election; and you could not do a thing more acceptable to our friends, than to deserve

censure, where you now receive praise.—To be serious, I am well convinced how imperfect our plans must be, if they are not assisted by your better judgment, and more mature experience. It is true, that by mere dint of personal exertion in the late Election we reduced the Court-majority in St. Anne's more than half; and where Sir Cecil Wray beat Mr. Fox by 300 in this parish, Lord Hood has not now beaten Lord John Townshend by more than 130; yet, I fear, we can never hope to equal, much less to conquer them, without the sanction of your name and presence; and these, I am persuaded, may effect much. Do, my dear Sir, allow me to expect the pleasure of your company at 4 o'clock on Monday at the King's Arms, in Compton-street. If you will not give it to the publick cause, may I presumptuously say, give it to me? especially as an old promise to meet Douglas here on the 20th, will otherwise preclude me from seeing you next week. As the mountain cannot come to Mahomet, will the Prophet of the East come to Quinbus Flestrin?

I am at all times and places, together or asunder,

Dear Sir,

Most devotedly and sincerely

Yours ever,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P.S. I beg my best compliments to the whole circle at the breakfast table.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, (August 1788.)

I AM exceedingly happy to have it in my power to contest your speculations on such good grounds. Fox thought on Thursday that if they did not beat us by 100 on the subsequent day, we were sure of the Election. I informed you yesterday, from such information as I could obtain at the moment, that we finished *nine a-head*; the truth was they gained *seven* on the other side. But in the effort of yesterday they exhausted all the little remains of their strength. Their poll this day opened, and has continued very slack. At eleven, which is the hour when their majority has always been highest, they were not above 13 a-head; at three an accurate state of the poll, when the numbers were for Lord John Townshend 250, for Lord Hood 180; leaving a majority of 70 to Lord John on this day's poll; and Lord Hood a majority of 59 only on the whole poll. A gentleman this moment returned from the hustings says we have since polled *eight* more, they have not polled *one* these three quarters of an hour. The poll will very shortly close, and we shall certainly end not less than 70 a-head for this day.—There is a force in Westminster fully sufficient to counterbalance the influence of the Crown; and that is the weight

of the various Clubs and Societies, with which I am now pretty well acquainted, and of which we have by much the majority. Their power will now be tried to the utmost; for I am told that Pitt has gone down post to Cheltenham to concert further measures with the high Powers there; get more peremptory orders, and a signature to a new Treasury warrant. Colonel Macnamara (who by the way was yesterday very much mauled at the head of a mob of sailors in Bond-street) publickly said, that Ministry were determined to prosecute the contest to the utmost, if it cost 150,000*l.* It has struck four. I cannot get intelligence of the close of the poll; but must go to the Shakespeare, where we dine, and make resolutions to bring each his man.

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely Yours ever,

F. LAURENCE.

Best compliments to Mrs. Burke, &c. &c. &c.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, October 20th, 1788.

NOT being certain of your return to Beaconsfield, till this day, I have put off my short visit of four and twenty hours from time to time. I shall however, probably come down on Monday, and on

Tuesday proceed to Oxford. Should I find it more convenient to go directly to Oxford, I shall take you in my way back either Wednesday or Thursday; but—on Thursday, or Friday morning at furthest—I must again be in Town. If there be any letter for me at Beaconsfield (—as I expect one from the Duke) I will trouble you to keep it where it is, till you see me.

Some little time since I received a letter from Douglas; he says that he saw *in* SWITZERLAND a GERMAN *publication* of an ENGLISH *account* of the proceedings in Westminster Hall,—probably taken from our papers. It was known to be spurious, and necessarily to give a very inadequate idea of the trial; yet the sale of it, thus distant from the place of publication, and the publication so distant from the place of its first production, seems to shew the eagerness of Europe for every thing in the appearance of information on this great subject. I think some general allusion to this might well be used to excite the attention of the Lords at the opening of the next meeting of the Court.—But I am stepping out of my province; and suggesting hints very impertinent, because, if just, very unnecessary.

I was lately told, that Hastings's Counsel have been very busy since the 15th of last month. Sheridan (I hear) says he would advise them to be diligent, as they are at present very ignorant. I (if I were their friend) would advise them not

to read a paper. I am sure, that the best defence of Hastings would be made by a man of talents who knew the least about him. I am therefore glad to find, they read, since I most dread an ignorant declamation suited to the apprehensions of the ignorant.

I hope that the late excursion has been of the best possible consequences to your health and that of Mrs. Burke. Believe me, my dear Sir, I have often wished to see you, and more often to be with you on your expedition; but present or absent,

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever most sincerely and devotedly Yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Commons, Nov. 3d, 1789.

NOT having seen the Morning Post, I know not whether it contains any account of the commencement of the Civil War in Austrian Flanders; for fear it may not, I enclose you my paper, where you will find it in the last page.—I dined yesterday with Dr. Brocklesby, and was truly glad to hear he had received so good intelligence of his patient, Mr. R. Burke. We had there Sir J. Reynolds, who continues perfectly well and in good spirits. I found also Courtenay and Malone among

many others, and was happy to learn from them that there is not a syllable of truth in the story of Lord Townshend, which, I doubt not you have heard, as I had it from Dr. W. King, who was just then come from you.

I beg my best compliments to Mrs. Burke, and all the party at Beaconsfield. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Burke here the latter end of the week, when I must insist on her dining with me. My House I trust will be in perfect order by that time. I find we have three or four holidays together the latter end of this month, and I intend to avail myself of them, if I can, to pay you a short visit.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely

Your obedient humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, C.C.C. Thursday Morning,
F.F.F. (October 1790.)

ON my arrival here yesterday, I was kindly informed by some of my friends, of an event which they thought might be of utility to me. The Chancellor of Peterborough and of Bristol is dead. The places are in the gifts of the respective Bishops—I am not certain whether they are by

custom conferred only on an *Ecclesiastic*. If they are Chancellorships which may be equally given to a Civilian, who is a layman or not, I should esteem it a singular favour, if you could point out to me the best channel of application. Should you be at a loss, I imagine that an Ex-Secretary of the Treasury ought to know a little, how a Bishop's pulse beats. I presume you cannot very well write in my favour to the Noble Dissenter, who may be presumed to have the chief sway with the Bishop of Peterborough. I suppose too, that, as the Right Reverend Father is believed to look a good deal to his influence at Cambridge, an Oxford man at best can have but very small chance. With the Bishop of Bristol I think there is a better prospect. Does he or does he not vote with Opposition? I think I have seen his name to protests; but am not sure. Should that be the case, and you have any means of early and immediate application to his Lordship, I am sure, my dear Sir, that you will not require an expression of my desire to you upon that subject. I shall write to the Duke about it, if I learn that the Bishop does range himself on the side of his Grace. But in the mean time believe me sincere when I say, there is no man of whatever rank or distinction, to whom I had rather owe any little advancement in life than to yourself.

I hope Richard improves daily in strength. My best congés to Mrs. Burke and all your family.

I am, my dear Sir,

Most sincerely ever

Your obedient humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P.S. Miss French's hat is lying before me. I have left it in charge of a friend, who has promised to send it by one of the coaches; probably to-morrow morning.

LETTER VII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Oct. 20th, 1790.

YOUR letter was waiting my arrival, when I returned on Monday evening. You said, that you should come to town with Richard on the *morrow*, but there was no date to ascertain what day that morrow was. On Tuesday morning I sent my servant to make enquiries at Lincoln's Inn. In the mean time I was myself so fortunate as to meet first Dr. Brocklesby, and afterwards Richard himself, from whom I learned that you had put the last hand to your labours.—I was happy in persuading myself, that he looked much better.

I beg leave to deprecate every contest with you

in turning sentences:—I meant what I said, and I accept what you answer, in plain sincerity of heart. I do not overvalue your interest with the Bench of Bishops; yet I think it a little higher than you allow it to be, though not so high, as ought to be the interest of a man of exemplary life, various information, pre-eminent talents, and a true friend of Religion. But in truth I looked only for that which you have done. I intended your application as a *caveat* against a precipitate promise to another. I should have thought it unjust to the Duke, if I had dreamt of resting all my hopes on any other friend, whoever he may be. I shall at the same time feel peculiar pleasure, if your letter shall have been of utility in giving the first impression.

I had written to the Duke by the same post as to yourself. I have yet received no answer; but having occasion to write on some other business, I took the opportunity of mentioning the persons, whom you pointed out.

From that quarter I must confess that I have no great hope of success; but I am not quite in despair as to the Bishop of Bristol.

Early to-morrow morning I set off for my brother's at Castle Hedingham, in Essex, where I purpose to stay about a week.

I just now received a message from Goring, that he is returned; and I had the satisfaction of hearing, that he left all your family well. I beg my

best compliments to Mrs. B., R. B. Sen^r, and all the rest of your household.

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever most sincerely
Your obliged humble Servant,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, London, March 27th, 1791.

I HAVE just time to give you notice that you must prepare for war on Monday. Pitt told Sheridan, that in the case of Captain Williams, though he thought Sir John Scott's arguments very absurd, yet he was now satisfied, that you were all wrong, and the business must go no further. I have just been blowing my trumpet in Wyndham's ears. I find him apt on this subject; but upon the other, which you commissioned me to mention, he has his doubts, not of the propriety of the thing, but of his own ability to make to his own satisfaction a little terse speech on a point, in which he feels nothing that fills and interests his mind. You had better speak to him yourself on Monday, as he has some designs of going out of town on Tuesday for the holidays.

I just now found Mr. R. Burke's card on my return from Wyndham's. I can therefore inform

you that he is well. I beg my best compliments to Mrs. Burke, &c. &c. And am,

Dear Sir, very sincerely
Your most obedient humble Servant,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, August 1st, 1791.

WILL you favour me with a line to inform me of your present plans and motions; if you intend to make any longer stay where you are, I purpose doing myself the pleasure of joining you the latter end of this week, or at the very beginning of the next. Mrs. Burke (I trust, from your continuance at Margate) finds the benefit of her bathing.

I write in great haste as I am just returned from Dodsley's, where I have made a seizure; and I am impatient to employ my time better than in writing to you;—I am eager to read you. Indeed I owe myself, in common justice, some reading of profit and amusement, for I have lately mispent my hours most wretchedly by reading the procès verbal of the National Assembly up to October 1789, the depositions taken at the Chatelet, and Monnier's examination of it; I have been dipping again into Mirabeau's Lettres à ses Commettans, and I have been wading through the procès verbal of the Hotel de Ville, which has some curious things,

from 6th May to the 30th of July 1791. There is a very able and furiously seditious speech of M. Bonneville, homme de lettres as he is called. I know not whether you have seen it; but it most plainly shews the bold designs of the democratic faction early, for it was made so soon as the 25th of June, 19 days before the attack on the Bastile, and several days before the arrival of the troops in the neighbourhood of Paris. It is, in my opinion, the best defence of the monarchical party; who could not plan too strong measures, when such things were tolerated: the burthen of the song is, *Aux armes, citoyens, aux armes.*

Necker's book too, which I have been looking into (a poor, contemptible, querulous, and self-flattering performance) throws some new light on the history of that period, which I think is the most important epoch;—from the meeting of the States General, and just before it, up to what may be properly called the Revolution begun on the 14th of July and compleated on the 6th of October 1789.

But I fear I have detained you impertinently on facts and topics less novel to you than to me; and I am sure I have kept myself too long from my promised pleasure and emolument in reading your Appeal. Believe me to be,

Dear Sir, most sincerely
Your most obedient humble Servant,
F. Laurence.

P.S. I beg my best compliments to all your Party.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, London, April 17, 1792.

I SEND you the Morning Post, because though a democratic paper, it gives a view of the actual state of Paris which the Morning Chronicle wholly suppresses, while it gives the proceedings of the National Assembly to as late a period. The Quidnuncs seem very well disposed to be cutting each others throats about the forty men from Chateauvieux, though not with swords made from the chains.

I had this morning a long conversation about the Association with George Rous, who is one of the *Associators*. I will tell you the particulars when I see you, which I hope will be on Thursday.

I beg my compliments to all with you; and am,

Dear Sir,

Very sincerely

Your obedient humble Servant,

F. LAURENCE.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Doctors Commons, July 31st, 1792.

TO-MORROW, if possible, I hope to come down to you by the Gloucester coach. I chuse that con-

veyance, though rather the latest, because I must first exhibit myself in court. My stay can only be till Thursday morning.

Enclosed you will find a specimen of the manner in which it is proposed to draw the syllabus of the Benares charge. The red ink is Mr. H's evidence. Have we any thing to do with that in our plan? Of the execution of the work you are not to judge by this, but only of the scheme and form. If any improvements suggest themselves to you, will you commit them to paper, so as to return the paper to Mr. Troward by to-morrow's post from Beaconsfield. I trust, I shall be with you before you close your letter in time to chat over whatever may occur to you on the subject.

About half an hour since I was very graciously accosted in the street by Mr. Perry, prime minister of the Morning Chronicle. He told me of the Committee who are to conduct the subscription in favour of Poland. Smith was the *only dissenter* present at the previous meeting. The Committee is to consist of Bankers and Merchants taken from among the principal of both parties. Some of the leaders in this business have been informed, that you have expressed yourself very warmly for the success of it; and they think it would much contribute to it, if you would be kind enough to draw up a short address to the Public on this occasion. The passage from your Appeal is to be

extracted, and re-published by the Committee in their Resolutions, or some other form! I promised to make their wishes known to you. It would be material to them (they say) to have your answer by Thursday morning. When I come to-morrow, if you approve it, I will write to Mr. Perry on the subject; but with submission, I should suggest, that you, if you agree to the request, had better write to none but the Polish minister.

I hope Mrs. Burke is better, and all the rest of your family as well as I left them.

I am, my dear Sir,

Most sincerely

Your obedient humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, August 28th, 1792.

THOUGH I have no good intelligence to send you, and indeed none at all beyond what your own Newspaper will convey to you; yet I cannot refrain from a short remark or two.

I am truly concerned to find, that Captain Woodford's representation of our Minister's message was nearer the truth, than the Duke of Portland's. It is stated in the same or very nearly the same words in all the other papers as in the

Morning Chronicle. I presume therefore that it is correctly given. Surely it is very paltry and submissive, and sanctions at least the *suspension* of the King, by talking of further violence as likely to excite indignation, and hoping this declaration will not be thought an infringement of our neutrality. The Ministerial papers, and particularly the World, hold out this neutrality as highly gratifying to the nation. It is printed in capitals in the World, and introduced with a great panegyric—not indeed on the *spirit*, but on the wisdom and *prudence* of the minister.

The Jacobins have answered in a manly style, much to the delight, I doubt not, of their affiliated friends on this side of the water. They seem to take no notice of our Court, but compliment us, as *the high-spirited people, who first acknowledged the Sovereignty of Nations.* This seems to be implicating us in a supposed approbation of their atrocities, and fixing the interpretation of our Minister's message to Lord Gower.

I met Hudson this morning. He says by the last ships, that he finds they have reverted at Bengal from agencies back again to contracts; and that bullocks are now again provided by contract. He cannot find any thing of Zemindars being paid for their troops, except in a minute of Mr. Shore's on the rights of Zemindars, where it is said, that remissions were made to them, when they crushed rebellions with their own troops.

"I cannot quit Town to-morrow. Will you give me a line by return of the post, *if you do not leave* Beaconsfield on Thursday.

"Remember me to Mrs. B., and all with you.

I am, dear Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

F. LAURENCE.

LETTER XIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, August 29, 1792.

I AM happy to find by the papers of this day, that the Minister's message to France was of a very different description from what appeared in the account of the National Assembly yesterday.

I went to John King, and asked him as to the authenticity of the copy in the papers. He said he believed it to be perfectly authentic. There is a phrase marked in Italics which I like much, as it seems to imply, though rather distantly, that the late events can in no manner be countenanced by us without infringing our neutrality as to the internal affairs of France. This seems to me to leave a clear opening to us to consider ourselves as at liberty from our neutrality in consequence of their late abominable proceedings.—Lord Carhampton told me yesterday in company, that he

believed, Prussia had insisted on our coming forward.

I heard from a friend an account of the 10th, which he had from an eye-witness, an English gentleman, who was accidentally passing homewards near the Thuilleries, when the attack was made. A Marseillois was the aggressor; he wanted to draw a cannon into the garden, but was told by a Swiss Guard, that he could not pass. He attempted to cut down the Swiss, who in return fired at and shot him. When the Swiss Guards fired their first volley, the mob ran away up an adjoining street, and seemed to be in a perfect panick. Had the Swiss Guards acted offensively, they might have at least taken the cannon from the populace with the utmost ease, and in the opinion of this gentleman, by pursuing them have made themselves masters of all Paris. But the Swiss remained quiet, till the populace rallied and returned the fire. The Guards fired at least six times for once. The cannon which the Marseillois served were so ill pointed, that far from hurting a single soul, they did not even hit the palace. After firing about twenty minutes the Swiss laid down their arms; and were immediately butchered. One fatal circumstance, I am told, was, that all the officers of rank, instead of endeavouring to animate the soldiers, went away to escort the King to the National Assembly. The National Guards did not actually fire on the Swiss,

but marched off, without assisting them, as the latter expected. The Swiss might have maintained their ground to this time, supposing them well supplied with ammunition, if they had not thrown down their arms and begged quarter. I learned several other particulars of the succeeding horrors, too long now to detail.

I was informed last night by a French gentleman, that besides the places which you will find in your paper, Landau also had surrendered.

I am, in great haste,

Dear Sir,

Ever yours most truly and devotedly,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XIV.

TO E. B. J. B. AND R. B.

London, October 29th, 1792.

MY DEAR, E. B., J. B., and R. B.,*

PERMIT me to thank you for your very kind, though very short letter; and yet I cannot help observing, that when three of you clubbed together, I might have hoped for a production, two or three sentences longer. I presume that you expect no answer, as it was all interrogatories, and I think you are not all of you quite so ignorant

* Edmund Burke, Jane Burke, and Richard Burke.

of the common law of the land, as not to know that an Englishman is not bound to answer interrogatories. However, of my own free grace and condescension I will answer your interrogatories in the most satisfactory manner.

And first of the first, How am I?—

I am well, if you are well: pay the —No! that will not do. What a pity! I had one of the cleverest things to say, and quite new, but I must keep it for some other occasion, as it will not apply at present.

Next, as to my where-about?—

—I shall leave you to find it out, and if you should discover it, I shall still think you not the more conjurers for that.

But why have you not heard from me?—

Instead of giving reasons on compulsion, I shall take the liberty of reminding you that there was another question, which according to all order and method you should have asked me, but have omitted:—It is, where have I been?

I shall answer my own question, instead of yours, and hope that answer will satisfy you as to both at once. Since I left you I have passed one day at Chippenham, two at Oxford, as many at Beaconsfield, not quite so many at Bulstrode, one day here, two days at Castle Hedingham in the most remote corner of Essex, from whence I am this moment arrived, and all the rest of the time I have spent, as Lord Egremont spends the greater

part of his life,—on the road. To-morrow I go again to divide three days more between Bulstrode and Beaconsfield, and on Friday return hither again to smoke and dirt, heavy briefs and light fees.

I flatter myself that during my short stay at Oxford, I put things in tolerably good train with the present and late Vice-Chancellors, the leader of our canvass, the Dean of Christ Church, and our principal opponent, the President of Trinity college, to all of whom I talked, and all of whom I found warm and zealous in favour of the poor French priests. A meeting of the Heads of Houses was to be called on Monday last, to settle the detail of the subscription from the University, immediately after which the Vice-Chancellor promised me to speak to the leading men of the city, to form a committee and carry on a subscription there; and upon these two measures was to be engrafted an invitation to the County at large in the Oxford paper of last Saturday.—I hope, that my two days at Oxford will balance my account for all my idleness beside, since I left Bath.

Wyndham was still lingering at Oxford, when I arrived there. He is as eager as ever against the reformers of Parliament, and more decided than ever on French politicks, but with rather too refining and argumentative a candour in excuse of all past delinquencies in all persons.

At Bulstrode I heard some things, which I will communicate when I see you all; but nothing material on any point, which you know.

I gave orders at Butler's Court for every thing to be in readiness for the family in the course of a week or fortnight from last week. The pigs I directed to have plenty of peas, and the sheep to be kept on the dryest part of the park and to have some dry meat as long as the wet weather should last; and some of both to be fattened.

And now Mr. R. B., one word or so with you. You may think that you have escaped me;—but not quite so easily. You, Sir, held the pen; and pray why did you give me no account of J. B.? Besides my own curiosity on that head, here shall I be persecuted to death with minute enquiries at Bulstrode and at Beaconsfield, and I have nothing for it, but to look wise and speak oracularly.

I am afraid you will think too much of this letter mere fooling; but I begin to suspect that in these days folly is the only wisdom.

I am, with the most fervent prayers for you all,

Most sincerely Yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XV.

TO MR. BURKE.

Doctors Commons, November 8, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is a great consolation to me, that as the mountain cannot go to Mahomet, Mahomet, I find, is likely to come to the mountain. I wished to have some chat with you on a subject which I did not chuse to put on paper; and for that purpose, as well as to pay my respects to Mrs. Burke on her return, I had intended to give my clients the slip by the back-door for a single day. This would at best have been very inconvenient, but is at present impossible. I am glad to find that you mean to visit Town; and fearing, that you might postpone your visit to accommodate me in my return, I thought it best to let you know the disarrangement of my little plan, in the hope, that this notice might bring you a little the sooner.—Let me hint to you, that your Brother and myself dine to-morrow with your friend John King.

Will you be so kind as to inform Mrs. Burke, I hope to pay my respects to her too some time in the present month. The account of her health, which I received from your Brother, gave me very great satisfaction; my pleasure wanted only one

little piece of good intelligence more about her limbs, to make it perfect. Believe me to be,

Dear Sir, most sincerely

Your obedient humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Dec. 11, 1792.

I FORGOT in my letter of yesterday to tell you that Sir William Scott has sent you a card for Sunday, to meet Wyndham, myself, and some others of your friends at dinner.

Having been all the morning in court, I know nothing of the news of to-day. Last night I called at Lord Loughborough's, but though I waited an hour I could not see him. I found Dundas's carriage at his door.

This evening I shall see his Lordship, and if I learn any thing particular will inform you by letter. I beg my best and kindest remembrances to all your family.—I am, in great haste,

Most sincerely

Your most obedient Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, C. C. C. Oxford. (1793.)

THE quiet conclusion of our furious battle you will hear from Dowdeswell by this same post. We mean however to canvass every vote not yet asked, and those who have declined giving an explicit answer. We have no fear of any after-game against us, as the resignation of the Duke of Beaufort's friends was declared to be "*in the hope of an unanimous election*:" yet we think it most secure in point of prudence, and most civil in point of attention to the members of the University, to continue our operations in the manner above stated.

To-morrow I intend proceeding to my Brother's. Hitherto I have kept myself ready here on my post. Walker King was *transported* to *Woodstock*, as soon as he came hither, and I was under sentence of transportation the day after the intelligence of poor Lord Guilford's death arrived; but I heard judgement pronounced against me with perfect composure, made no reply, took the liberty of staying where I was, and finally have been flattered with some acknowledgements, that I was of service in various ways.—If I can, I shall pay my respects to you on Thursday next, if possible for A DAY, *but one day only*.

Now that our contest here is over, I feel myself full of the affairs of France. However my time and the limits of this letter forbid my entering on the subject.

I am, my dear Sir, most sincerely
Your obliged and devoted
Humble Servant,
F. LAURENCE.

P. S. I beg my best compliments to Mrs. Burke and all your family.

LETTER XVIII.

TO DR. LAURENCE FROM MR. BURKE.

MY DEAREST LAURENCE, Cromwell's Lodge. (1794.)

THINGS are bad enough—but the Doctors bid me not think them desperate. His stomach is continually on the turn—nothing rests on it, owing to the irritation caused by the inflammation of the trachea towards the bottom. The fever continues much as it was—He sleeps in a very uneasy way from time to time—but his strength decays visibly, and his voice is in a manner gone. But God is all sufficient—and surely his goodness and his mother's prayers may do much. As to me, I feel dried up. Don't talk too much of the matter—only to the Chancellor—and

merely in civility to him. Whether I am to have any objects depends on his recovery.

LETTER XIX.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR, DEAR SIR, (August, 1794.)

HAD I not considered the business which you entrusted to me in your afflicting letter, as my first object and duty, I believe that I should have ventured to obtrude myself upon you yesterday, that I might for one day have had the melancholy pleasure of sharing in your sorrows.—I have now to tell you in what train I have put matters for Westminster-hall.

There is a report that Hastings himself means to call Lord Cornwallis. If so, the Managers seem to be of opinion that they should at once agree and offer Mr. Larkins also, to whom Mr. Hastings has referred for a full explanation of his bribes. If Hastings does not propose to call Lord Cornwallis, then Mr. Grey in a short speech is to state the situation of the trial, and the order intended to be followed in what remains; and in conclusion offer Mr. Larkins. If Mr. Hastings accepts the offer, we can cross-examine Mr. Larkins to any thing. If he declines, that circumstance, it is believed, will excite the curiosity of the Lords, and make them more disposed to examine him,

when we produce him. The whole evidence is to be given; and after our evidence, Mr. Hastings's counsel are to be called upon to make such observations as they may think necessary, before the Managers reply: You are to conclude. The Chancellor, (who sent for me to enquire after you, and who expressed himself most kindly and affectionately on the subject of your late calamity) seems to approve this mode of proceeding. He offered, if you chose, to get the trial put off for some short time.—Anstruther has not been able to proceed with the examination of Mr. Larkins. Grey I am to meet in consultation on Wednesday evening; and I am now at Sheridan's to prepare him. He is very much in earnest.—If you have any thing to suggest, and do not yet mean to return, let me have your directions.

Oh! my dear Sir, what a stroke was that, which we all suffered last week. I did indeed well know the sincerity of his friendship for me. Never, never since I was acquainted with him, did I receive from him a single word in the slightest degree tinctured with bitterness. I loved the strong virtues of his heart, as much as I respected the soundness of his head; and many, very many days and years of pleasure and of profit did I vainly promise myself from his society. But the Maker and Dispenser of all has spoken, and we *must* obey. May He who only can, comfort and sustain you and poor Mrs. Burke. I lose all

sense of my own misfortune in my sympathy with yours; and suffer me to say, that I feel still more for Mrs. Burke than for you. You will necessarily plunge into scenes, where his image will not be mingled up with every object around; she will have no refuge from objects with which the memory of him will inevitably be associated, and which will every minute recal him to her mind. May God protect and support her! I have not omitted that petition one day since the melancholy event.

Adieu for the present, my dear Sir; I scribble in haste without premeditation.—Once again God bless you and all yours.

Your truly sincere and afflicted

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XX.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, 22d May 1795.

It was indeed a very considerable time since we heard from you: But we considered your silence as a proof that you had remembered us, not that you had forgot us. You know that we are not stout enough for bad news; and there was nothing good to be told. You visited us however with the lark and the first peep of day. God knows it is a poor crepusculum—a small advantage, very dearly bought,

and not promising, I think, the consequences which some accounts led us to expect. But we must take what God gives. As to me, I believe my affair is out of the question. He has delayed it so long, that he is partly ashamed, partly afraid, and partly unwilling to bring it on.—But in that too, submission is my duty and my policy. It signifies little how these last days are spent—and on my death—I think they will pay my debts. The best is, that we are soon to see you and the Kings. Adieu, God Almighty bless you!

Your unhappy friend,

E. BURKE.

LETTER XXI.

TO THE SAME.

July 1, 1795.

THANK you, my dear Sir, for your two very kind letters. We have to accuse the rain much more for keeping you away, than for keeping back the mowing of our clover. I am glad the Thelwal festival has passed over without bloodshed: But in truth I do not at all like those large meetings, congregated by such people, for such purposes, and on such principles. They habituate the people to bold assemblages; they make themselves appear in force; and the ill-disposed give a countenance to each other, and their leaders. When

met in consequence of such summonses as you describe, directly factious, I doubt much of the legality of the meeting: But if they are within the letter of the law, politically speaking, the thing is worse. Every day almost furnishes an example of the inefficiency of our laws; or, what I believe to be nearer to the truth, of the debility of those who are to carry them into execution. Our police is not very brilliant; but every good man is obliged to one exertion of it. The D. of Portland, the very night of the affair of Lord F. was so kind as to send me word of the event. I should not wonder if it had made him sick at heart.

I am very well pleased with your project about Stuart. I do not see why he should not get some commission in a fencible regiment. He is born an English subject—He says a Canadian. What he means by writing to me, that he wants to be a day labourer, I cannot conceive. It is perfect folly. However he seems to be ingenious, at least in some degree, and a man of sensibility and spirit.

Mrs. Burke, poor Will, and all here, salute you cordially.

Ever affectionately,

Your unhappy friend,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXII.

TO MR. BURKE.

Admiralty Court, February 12th, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

BEFORE this, I was in hopes that I might have heard from you some better intelligence of Mrs. Burke's health. I desired Cuppage after he had been down with you to let me know, but I have neither seen or heard any thing of him. Mr. William Burke sent me a letter the other day, written, I believe, by one of the young ladies, but not a syllable about Mrs. Burke. From all these circumstances I am led to flatter myself, that she may be better; at least not worse.

By young Burke, I sent you some intelligence of the discoveries made by the Emperor respecting the treachery of some of his Generals. Ministry had accounts, but not quite so full as mine. The papers now say that there have been more than twenty persons of some condition in life arrested.

The King of Prussia has settled his question with Russia relative to Poland. He has got Warsaw; and now he is willing to assist in driving the French out of Holland. He has certainly offered himself to this country, if we will subsidize him. The Emperor cannot stir without a loan. To thicken the intrigue, French Commissioners are now arrived here, it is said, to make peace on Mr. Pitt's own terms—but I doubt.

They are of course aiming to play England against Austria.

There is one subject which truly alarms me. The Civil List is a year and half in arrears, and a further addition is to be brought before Parliament. The great expences of the Emigrés are, as I collect from conversations with ministerial men, to be the pretence of the debt. What a fertile mother of mischief in all ways is this application likely to be!

Have you seen the State-papers from America; containing the French Plot in that country? I have not got them yet, but saw some extracts in the Papers. If you have them not, I think you should write to Owen for it, as he is the re-publisher. It comes just in time for your argument.

Apropos of the pamphlet. I have seen or heard nothing of it, but that the newspapers are already disputing all the principles of it. I have been repeatedly asked for it by private friends, who will not believe me that it is not actually finished, printed, and confidentially circulated:

Jurantem me scire nihil mirantur, ut unum
Scilicet egregii mortalem altiq; silenti.

You will see from whence I date this letter, and I am just going to speak. Pray, my dear Sir, let me have a line to inform me of Mrs. B.'s state of health.

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever most truly and devotedly Yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XXIII.

TO THE SAME.

Court of Prerogative, Doctors' Commons,
MY DEAR SIR, February 26th, 1796.

A LETTER intended for Dr. W. King was yesterday brought to me by Nagle. It contained a passage which he and I thought it necessary to communicate to the Chancellor before this day's debate. In consequence I copied it into a note from myself, leaving it to his Lordship to keep it for the direction of his own exertions in that protection, which I doubted not his friendship would give to your fame, or to make any publick use of the substance of it, as he might think most honourable to you.

You seem, my dear Sir, a little to have misapprehended Windham's objections. The first was only a fear of a misconstruction from a mode of expression. "*One* language for a gracious benefactor, *another* for a proud and insulting foe."—What then! (he thought the Jacobins might say) he is a man of a double tongue, with two opposite languages for the same thing, is he?—Windham, therefore, not disagreeing with the idea, only wished from caution that it be a little more opened. I saw the danger, but did not fear it equally, as I told Woodford, from whom I learnt the objections of our friend.

The other fault imputed to your "quantities incommensurable" was a little mathematical inaccuracy. And certainly it was so. It should have been "*money* and such services, &c. are quantities incommensurable," "*money* is made," &c.—but as the word "money" occurred also in the sentence immediately preceding; it would have been too direct a repetition of the same thing. As you mistook the point when referred to you, and there was no time for another reference, I have taken on myself to correct it. It may be a little flattened, but is at least unexceptionable, and I would not give any "thorough-bred metaphysician" or mathematician the least collateral advantage over you. I have consolidated it with the former sentence thus; "Between money and such "services, if done by abler men than I am, there "is no common principle of comparison; they "are quantities incommensurable. Money is "made," &c.

In p. 15, I have made a slight alteration. There was a confusion of *they* and *them*; and you made the "*means*" furnish *means*. I have removed these trifling hitches; though I think there it is certainly somewhat flatter, yet not essentially so.

In p. 17, (as I recollect) I have introduced two or three words. After a long digression on your habit and principle of deriving all aid from others, you resumed your immediate subject; "I *then* consulted." The word "*then*" seemed to me too

feeble a reference and connection. I have put it more pointedly, and to make it more so, have introduced a word "ever" into the preceding sentence. It now will stand—"Poor in my own "faculties, I ever thought myself rich in theirs. "In that period of difficulty and danger more "especially, I consulted and co-operated," &c.— Luckily that page was one line shorter than the opposite page; so that typographically it is an improvement.

In the former p. 16, there is also a mere verbal alteration to prevent the use of "*those*" and "*that*," as antecedent and relative.

I have changed the passive form for the active form in another place to avoid an ambiguity, which required twice reading over; and in the last page I have introduced an "however," where it seemed necessary as a word of transition. "Whatever His Grace may think of me"—"How-"ever let His Grace think as he may of me," &c. "*But*" had been used just before and after, so I have made it what I have said.

The final *k* after *c*, and the *u* in final syllables of *o u r*,' were sometimes expressed and sometimes omitted. Perceiving that you generally retained them in your own proper writing, I have directed them to be restored throughout.

If there be any thing in all this which you would wish to change back or otherwise, it may be done in the next edition. The press now could not stop.

Nagle told you yesterday all the intelligence about the pamphlet. I have not been out to-day or seen a paper. I can only add that Mr. Pitt is highly delighted with it, *as well as all the world*, says Woodford.

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever most sincerely and devotedly Yours,

F. LAURENCE.

P. S. I am happy to hear that Mrs. Burke continues so to amend. Remember me in the kindest manner to her and Mr. William Burke. I am tied by the leg here for three weeks to come at least. This is written from court.

LETTER XXIV.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, [Feb. 27th, 1796.]

I THANK you for the pains you are so good as to take. I don't recollect in my letter to Walker that I said any thing to be communicated to the Chancellor. It is to satisfy Windham. As to the commensurability—perhaps the best way is to strike out the sentence entirely in the next edition. It is too late in the third, which was sent to me to-day. The truth is, at first money and such services, &c.—are quantities incommensurable—but I found myself embarrassed with the repetition of the word—but in strictness, *geome-*

trically, the term is proper enough—that is called *simply*, and without relation, an incommensurable quantity or line, which has no common measure or common aliquot part to measure it with some other: Every thing to be measured with another, must certainly refer to that to which it is to be measured, and this finds whether it be or be not commensurable—but I am sure it is common to use the term alone and absolute, because the usual reference is known, as the side of a square is incommensurable with the diagonal. It was a relation of course to the lines before spoke of. I believe it is word for word as it stood in my speech for the reform. But it is perhaps less reconcileable to moral than to geometrical propriety. However, arrogant as it may seem, it is no way uncommon —to say, that such or such a thing as I do for such or such a person, or on such or such a motive, is what no money could make me undertake—or such as no money could compensate to me. As to the rest, with regard to the difference of *Styles*—can any thing in the world be more common than to use disqualifying phrases with regard to your friends when they are treating you with kindness, and to use the very contrary to enemies that crush you?—"I don't deserve, my "dear Laurence, that you should take all this "trouble for me in the midst of your pressing "business"—Would this be a proper answer for those who should say I was unworthy of having

this done? This, like all styles, is a matter of sentiment and decorum, and must be measured by the rules and principles of the decent and fit. The geometrical simile may go with Mr. Reeves to the fire—but the decorum I cannot give up. But t signifies nothing: what I wrote was to discharge a debt I thought to my own and my Son's memory, and to those who ought not to be considered as guilty of prodigality in giving me what is beyond my merits, but not beyond my debts, as you know. The publick—I won't dispute longer about it—has overpaid me—I wish I could overpay my creditors. They eat deep on what was designed to maintain me.

What is most material, your friend Mrs. Burke is, I bless God for it, much better. Her pains, which had returned with great violence, by the application of a new blister are gone, and she is quite easy—but still weak, and not able to go out of her bed—It is amazing how weak all these things leave her. Adieu! and a thousand thousand thanks.

Yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXV.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, March 15th, 1796.

It was impossible for me to come on Sunday last, nor till next Sunday can I be with you. I then hope to see you at dinner. Woodford, I believe, will accompany me.

For the good intelligence which you give me respecting Mrs. Burke, though not quite so good as I could wish, I yet sincerely thank you. It seems to me a great deal that she is so free from pain. God bless you both together!—for how long or short a time we must submit to Him.

I read with attention, and have safe in my possession, the whole packet of letters which you sent me. Lord Fitzwilliam on every occasion as he is more known, rises proportionably in my admiration. His visit to the Speaker was worthy of him. His concluding opinion, that you should do nothing, makes much impression upon me, and I wish before any thing be actually done, that it could be made convenient for him to meet you either here or at Beaconsfield, so that you might fully talk the matter over with him. In truth from every thing which I can collect here, I begin to be staggered about the possibility of your doing any thing to answer your object; and if the attempt fails, I fear, it may be even injurious to you.

On Sunday evening, I was at the Chancellor's. After his Levee, he detained me for an hour; and shewed me one or two of your letters. The substance of his last answer, which of course I did not let him understand that I had seen, he repeated to me with great accuracy. There was nothing of importance in our conversation on this subject, except that his Lordship admitted, if Mr. Hastings's answer to Sir S. Lushington had come before him in the shape of an affidavit, it would have weighed nothing in mitigation of punishment. Mr. H. he observed always *argues* and never *asserts* about his own money-transactions. From all my remarks on the whole tenor of what passed, I do not in the least apprehend any further scandal of the kind, which you fear.

The Speaker, whom I saw yesterday, was much more direct. He assured me that on considering the thing again and again, he thought, *and was sincerely sorry to think*, that nothing could be done. He did not see, that you could raise such an interest, as would entitle your petition to be received. That nothing effectual could follow from it he was positive, as it had before been found impossible to carry the printing of the abstract begun by Troward. But that he put out of the question. The point was, whether you could get a petition on the Journals, as that alone might be sufficient for the clearing of your own character. Mr. Hatsell and Mr. Ley came

in, and we all had a consultation upon it. I explained as well as I could, the manner of your introducing it. They said, it was ingenious, and came near to the principle, but still did not judge it enough to make a petition admissible, unless you could shew to the House actual libels and attacks upon your character, arising out of your share in the Impeachment. If such should follow the late grant to Mr. Hastings, it might be doubted whether you might not then come to the House; yet even then they were not confident of your success, as the thanks of the House already conferred on you were the most solemn testimony which they could give to your conduct, and on that ground the petition (which it was supposed would not be directed in the prayer to the punishment of the Libellers) might be rejected by the House.

It struck me, that the reason of such rejection might appear on the record in a manner to answer something of your end. But Mr. Hatsell replied, that *no reason was ever inserted.* I suggested the printing of the Trial; but I was informed, that had always been done by the order of the Chancellor under authority of the Lords. They agreed that it might be done by the Commons, as they did conceive, with Selden, the House of Commons to be an integral part of the Court; but as it never had been done by them, it would certainly be resisted now in the present temper of the majo-

rity on the whole business of India. The Speaker took me aside and said, that he was afraid any irregular attempt to bring it forward now, might prevent its being done hereafter if any opportunity offered in a legitimate way. He was anxious and eager, that *the top, bottom, and all the sides of the business*, should be at some time before the world; and he rejoiced in what I had intimated to him of your intentions to work upon the history of it, leaving me charged to finish it, should you be interrupted in the execution of it by the hand of God.

Indeed upon the whole I am satisfied that no further mischief is likely to follow. This is bad and disgraceful enough, God knows; but, though with much reluctance, I am ultimately inclined to think that for the present you had best not expose yourself to the misconstructions which will be sure to attend your personal interposition at this moment, when you will and can have no support. It may deserve consideration whether you could not petition the House of Lords for the printing of the Trial. You have there a favour to request, and they have given no sanction to your character, but there you are certain of a very prostituted majority open-mouthed against you.

Your papers and books I will give directions to have sent you; and when you have dismissed your present work, I shall be most happy to unite

my little exertions with your gigantick powers to get every thing in order; to have the abstract of the whole evidence completed, and arrange all your Speeches, which (especially your final Reply) embrace in a manner the whole subject. Such a publication, with an introductory history, and an appendix of the strongest papers, will be your best and most satisfactory Protest. The pamphlets on which you are now employed will furnish a fund for these expences, which I trust will in turn repay themselves with interests.

As to the Regicide Peace, the Chancellor wished it to be delayed a month or so. His reason was, that he thought men's minds were settling more and more daily to the prosecution of the war. When I told him that you would make two separate publications of it, he was eager that the first should come as soon as possible. He hopes you will not forget to shew that the principles of the present Government in France are just as diabolical as those of Roberspierre or any former regicide faction; and that the declarations in the beginning of their new Constitution, *which misled us*, were only for their own purposes, as they could not profess to build at all on their own Jacobin principles. The words underscored were the very words. The rest is the substance of what he said.

I scrawl this in court. I have more to say on

this latter subject, but must defer it till to-morrow, when *from court again* I shall write to you, but not quite so long a letter.

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever yours most devotedly,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, March 17th, 1796.

A POSTSCRIPT is said often to convey the principal point of a letter. Yours is certainly the most pleasing part to me. I rejoice at the thought of meeting Mrs. Burke once more in the dining-parlour. Thinking that she has too much neglected taking the air, I hope she will now make up for her former *sins* of omission; for *sins* I may truly call them, when you, as well as all her friends, are so much interested in the consequences.

Your two packets under Lord Inchiquin's covers, I received. Poor Wilde! It is the most embarrassing case, where liberty is hazardous and restraint seems cruel. I think you have treated him with great medical skill.

As to your own madness, though not shewing itself the same way, it is just as real as that of Democritus. It is your folly to be alone wise. As long as I hoped that I could terrify Ministers into any compromise, which might serve your purpose,

I endeavoured it. But now doubting whether any public step can be taken, which would not (with all parties against you) subject you to misinterpretations as injurious as those you would wish to avoid, I fear that your letters, and make them as strong as you please, will be the only protest which I can advise, till we can bring out our own publication of the Trial in our own way.

As to the other *wisdom* of yours, I hear a great desire of it, and intimations, that you have suppressed it in favour to Ministers for their late defence of you. I have a better argument about the emigrants. *One corps only is gone* to the West Indies, the greater part of which is made up of *German* mercenaries. No others are to go. It was found that their *capitulations* did not allow it, and some of them have therefore been broken.

There are one or two more passages in Anderson to your purpose. There was a new addition of capital to the Bank by Act of Parliament. One fifth was to be subscribed in their own bank-note with eight per cent, and four-fifths in Exchequer tallies and orders, which (Dr. Davenant in his Essay on Loans, 1710, says) were received at par, and cost the subscribers only from £.55 to £.65 per cent: so that Government-securities were from £.35 to £.45 per cent discount. D'Avenant in the work just quoted thus describes shortly the necessities of that period—"The Govern-" ment (says he) appeared like a distressed debtor,

" who was daily squeezed to death by the exorbi-
" tant greediness of the lender. The citizens
" began to decline trade and to turn usurers.
" Foreign commerce attended with the hazards of
" war, had infinite discouragement; and people
" in general drew home their effects, to embrace
" the advantage of lending their money to the
" Government."

I am just come out of court from a long cause, which I hope will not continue to Monday, as it will in that case deprive me of the pleasure of seeing you on Sunday.

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever most devotedly yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, March 26th, 1796.

LAST night I received a note from Mr. Windham, inviting me to meet him to-day at Beaconsfield. I am sorry it was not in my power to come, though, but on the chance of finding him there; nor I fear, can I come till to-morrow se'nnight at soonest.

Windham's purpose is to urge the speedy publication of the Regicide Peace, in which I agree with him.

When I last saw you, I mentioned something of the similarity of the war considered as a mere territorial question, in Louis the XIVth's time and the present. The little book which I quoted is called the Interests of Princes and States, printed in 1680. It is the work of a well-informed and travelled man. He says in his preface, that to judge of the designs of Louis from the general tenor of all the French writers of that day, his object was to make *the left bank of the Rhine his boundary*; claiming the whole kingdom of *Austrasia*. In many parts of that little work the great advantage of France in possessing the ports of the Netherlands against this country, and the importance of Holland as the great bulwark of this country, are exceedingly well put. Twice did the popular cry compel Charles reluctantly into a resistance to the views of France, and the result of the compromise which his corruption made was the necessity of two long and obstinate wars under William and Anne. That of William alone is to your purpose, as carried on with spirit and perseverance by a *new* monarch under great and accumulated distress. To state all the particulars of that distress, I know is not your object; but there is one feature, stronger as I recollect, than any mentioned in Anderson. A writer in one of the State Tracts published in 1698, says that the salt-tallies were the best securities of government, bore an interest of 7 ½ per cent, yet were then at 64 per

cent only, and had been a few months before as low as 50 *per cent.*

I hope Mrs. Burke continues to mend. Last night I called on poor *English.* He has been very ill, but is now much better.

The post-bell is ringing. I must conclude. Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Yours ever most devotedly,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I saw Troward's brother to-day. He says your books and papers shall come very soon. I gave directions for the MS. papers not to be forgotten.

LETTER XXVIII

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, July 28, 1796.

I THANK you for employing the short moment you were able to snatch from being useful, in being kind and compassionate. Here I am in the last retreat of hunted infirmity. I am indeed aux abois; But, as through the whole of a various and long life I have been more indebted than thankful to Providence, so I am now singularly so, in being dismissed, as hitherto I appear to be, so gently from life, and sent to follow those who in course ought to have followed me, whom, I trust, I shall yet, in some

inconceivable manner, see and know; and by whom I shall be seen and known. But enough of this.

However, as it is possible that my stay on this side of the grave, may be yet shorter, than I compute it, let me now beg to call to your recollection, the solemn charge and trust I gave you on my departure from the publick stage. I fancy I must make you the sole operator, in a work in which, even if I were enabled to undertake it, you must have been ever the assistance on which alone I could rely. Let not this cruel, daring, unexampled act of publick corruption, guilt, and meanness, go down to a posterity, perhaps as careless as the present race, without its due animadversion, which will be best found in its own acts and monuments. Let my endeavours to save the Nation from that shame and guilt, be my monument; The only one I ever will have. Let every thing I have done, said, or written, be forgotten, but this. I have struggled with the great and the little on this point during the greater part of my active life; and I wish after death, to have my defiance of the judgments of those, who consider the dominion of the glorious Empire given by an incomprehensible dispensation of the Divine Providence into our hands, as nothing more than an opportunity of gratifying, for the lowest of their purposes, the lowest of their passions—and that for such poor rewards, and for the most part, indirect and silly bribes, as indicate even more the

folly than the corruption of these infamous and contemptible wretches. I blame myself exceedingly for not having employed the last year in this work, and beg forgiveness of God for such a neglect. I had strength enough for it, if I had not wasted some of it in compromising grief with drowsiness and forgetfulness; and employing some of the moments in which I have been roused to mental exertion, in feeble endeavours to rescue this dull and thoughtless people from the punishments which their neglect and stupidity will bring upon them for their systematic iniquity and oppression: But you are made to continue all that is good of me; and to augment it with the various resources of a mind fertile in virtues, and cultivated with every sort of talent, and of knowledge. Above all make out the cruelty of this pretended acquittal, but in reality this barbarous and inhuman condemnation of whole tribes and nations, and of all the classes they contain. If ever Europe recovers its civilization, that work will be useful. Remember! Remember! Remember!

It is not that I want you to sacrifice yourself blindly and unfruitfully, at this instant. But there will be a season for the appearance of such a record; and it ought to be in store for that season. Get every thing that Troward has.

Your kindness will make you wish to hear more particulars of me: To compare my state with that of the three first days after my arrival, I feel

on the whole less uneasiness—But my flesh is wasted in a manner which in so short a time no one could imagine. My limbs look about to find the rags that cover them, My strength is declined in the full proportion; and at my time of life new flesh is never supplied; and lost strength is never recovered. If God has any thing to do for me here, here he will keep me. If not, I am tolerably resigned to his divine pleasure. I have not been yet more than a day in condition to drink the waters—but they seem rather to compose than to disorder my stomach. My illness has not suffered Mrs. Burke to profit as she ought of this situation. But she will bathe to-night. Give Woodford a thousand kind remembrances. Please God, I shall write to him to-morrow. Adieu.

Your ever true friend,

EDMUND BURKE.

Mrs. Burke never forgets you, nor what remains of poor William.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Bath, August 26th, 1796.

WHEN I received your last kind letter, I was in a way at best very doubtful, to my feelings, desperate. I make one of the earliest uses of a small returning degree of strength, to thank you for that

and for all other tokens of your friendship. It looks, as if Providence, for some wise ends, relative to my own better preparation for death, or for some services to those who are near and dear to me, was resolved to continue me here something longer than I looked for. Your regard for me will justify some detail of my case: I find myself slowly, but with a nearly uniform progress, recovering. The mere complaint itself is very nearly as it has been: But the consequences are not in the same in any painful or debilitating circumstances. I am still indeed emaciated and comparatively weak: but not at all, as for the first fortnight after my arrival here, going perceptibly backward. I believe the Bath waters cannot do much more for me than they have done: but for a long time, Mrs. Burke, from her sedulous and unremitting anxiety for me, has not profited of the bathing, which I believe good for her case—so that on that account, I shall continue here some time longer.

The troublesome legacy which I left to you, was with the modifications, if I do not mistake, that your letter mentions. God forbid, that I should lay that load on the shoulders of a friend to his ruin. I am happy in the nature of the causes that prevent your accession to this sad inheritance; particularly, that you are got near to that object, which I have by many ways endeavoured to compass for you, or rather for the Country

—and which my dear Son almost in his dying hours had strongly at heart. Long may you serve the Nation, professionally, professorially, parliamentarily; and long may you have a Nation existing to serve: Mrs. Burke joins cordially in these wishes.

I am ever, with great affection and attachment,
My dear Sir,
Most sincerely yours,
EDMUND BURKE.

Poor Will is rather more feeble in his limbs—in other respects, in the way you saw him—What there is of him is very much yours.

LETTER XXX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, September 2d, 1796.

I AM not a little surprised, that so long a time should pass without my hearing from you; and especially that you have not noticed my last letter. What I enclose will save me the trouble of saying much; and indeed the letters coming in rather late, and the necessity of an immediate and very full acknowledgment of Lord F.'s kindness to us both, give me but very little time to explain myself at large as I could wish to do. I certainly wish, above most things, to have an hour's conver-

sation with you—but that, before your answer to Lord Fitzwilliam, which cannot be long delayed, is a thing impossible. I do not know what the nature and circumstances of the Seat are to which you alluded in your letter to me. If it be that which Woodford had in his eye, and which, in the most profound secrecy, he entrusted to me, I do not well know, what solid foundation, that business stands on. This which is now offered to you, if not very favourable to your first views of interest, is, from the connexion, by far the most honourable that this kingdom affords. Most of the principles laid down in that letter are such as we hold in common, as firmly as our incomparable friend maintains them; and as to personal attachment from gratitude and esteem, there is no doubt you will think of it in a different view from that in which it is regarded by * * * and by * * *.

As to the rest, I recommend nothing. Your judgment is better than mine. I certainly wish to see you afloat in the Parliamentary channel; and the tide in the affairs of men is not safely neglected. God direct you. If you cannot accept (which I don't think) from prior engagement or on the view of things—I am sure your refusal will be such as will shew the sense you have of the highest honour we can receive, to be distinguished by one of the most able and virtuous men, if not eminently the most so, in the country and age we

live in. In or out of Parliament Mrs. Burke and I say, God bless you. Adieu.

Faithfully yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

Say not a word of Lord Fitzwilliam's letter to any human creature. Thinking it possible you may not be in Town, I enclose this to Woodford.

DR. LAURENCE TO LORD FITZWILLIAM,

(Upon the subject alluded to in the last Letter.)

MY LORD, Doctors' Commons, Sept. 6th, 1796.

BY Saturday's post Mr. Burke transmitted to me a letter of your Lordship's respecting myself, which I feel and ever shall feel, as one of the greatest honours of my life. To be distinguished by the good opinion of a man as eminent for virtues and talents, as illustrious by birth, is in my estimation always an object of fair ambition; but it is doubly flattering to be thought worthy of so great a trust by your Lordship under your present circumstances, when late events must have rendered you so much more cautious, in whom you place confidence. I will also add, that your Lordship's offer was still dearer and more interesting to me from the channel, through which it came.

Had I only consulted my inclinations, I should not have hesitated a moment; for I will plainly

avow that, with my principles and opinions, a public connexion with your Lordship is that alone which could give me perfect satisfaction in the present situation of things. But I have paused. I have ever considered the acceptance of a seat in Parliament as the undertaking of a most weighty charge. At the same time every man owes to his country the service of his talents, whatever they may be, if there be a serious call made upon him, such as I esteem your Lordship's offer. We find however in life, my Lord, many conflicting duties, which cannot always be reconciled without sacrifices on both sides. I know not exactly whether at this instant I ought to feel that embarrassment. Perhaps the best way will be to explain myself candidly and fully on all points of your Lordship's letter, both on things and persons, and then submit myself wholly to your Lordship's judgment.

As to things, with regard to external considerations; so entirely do my sentiments coincide with your Lordship's conduct, that I think it unnecessary to say any thing more on the subject. It would be my pride to shew, that all have not abandoned those sentiments.

With regard to internal considerations: I am the determined enemy of *innovation*; I dislike all great changes, which may be still short of actual innovation; and in every change I think (to express myself legally) that there lies a very heavy burthen of proof against him who proposes it.

Changes should be watched with more jealousy in proportion as they touch, or nearly approach the body of the Constitution itself. Such, my Lord, is my creed in general on this head; but I will beg leave to trouble your Lordship with some details.

What is much misnamed Parliamentary Reform I never approved. Having a private acquaintance with Major Cartwright, I was by his means elected, while absent at Oxford, a member of the Constitutional Society, in my youth and their infancy. They sent me a bundle of their papers, by which I was so fully convinced, that I have never read one of their separate publications since, nor ever was at their Society, though I have resided fourteen years in London, and for two or three of the early years received perpetual notices and summonses. I never but once attended any public meeting on the question, various as its fortune has been; it was at the Thatched House, whither I went accidentally, and where I stayed to vote against it.

On the reform proposed in the internal government of the Scotch Burghs, I think a little differently. I was originally employed as counsel by the burgesses, and then made an honorary member of their committee here. It is a question which I should never be the first to stir. I think it would rather do good than harm, and not very much of either. It has nothing to do with the democracy

of the burghs, the craftsmen or mechanics; they do now elect their counsellors annually: it relates to the rights of the guild-brethren, the merchants and heritors of lands; and they proceeded not on theories but on their ancient charters and ancient practice; and would have compromised for one half.

The Test-act is another subject which has often been, and may be again before Parliament. I shall only relate what passed some years since between the Duke of Portland and myself. A considerable body of Dissenters applied to me through a friend of mine, desiring me to offer their support to his Grace in every thing, if he would assist them in the repeal of the Test-act. I accepted and simply executed my commission. His Grace declined the offer in a very wise and sound answer, of which I afterwards made use with good effect for his service at Oxford. He hinted that I had given no opinion, and did me the honour of allowing me to make any observations on his answer. I then thought it right to declare myself, and told his Grace that I differed from him in nothing, except that if I were a mere individual member I should stay away from the question, but that if I were a person of political importance, so as not to absent myself without impropriety, I should be very unwilling to vote directly for a test, which as a member of the Church of England I did not like to have so applied.

The systematic abuse of popular privileges, which is licentiousness, is dangerous in a free constitution; perhaps more so than an abuse of Royal Prerogatives; because the former is less easily checked than the latter: you must correct the manners and habits of a multitude. Occasional abuses, springing from no formed design, will attend every thing useful. But in the present time I sincerely agree with your Lordship's conclusion, that "I had rather see the good curtailed "than the evil extended;—I had rather see a "bad Minister go uncorrected, than a good con-"stitution stabbed in its vitals."

Indeed, my Lord, this perplexing choice for men of integrity, will, I fear, exist long. It will be long before external and internal considerations can be separated. Whenever our pusillanimity or the necessities of the enemy shall compel an armistice, under the false name of a peace, the great difficulty will in my poor judgment but begin. While the war lasts, the hostile mind, though never less hostile than in the present contest, keeps us aloof from the fraternal embrace; but a French ambassador taking precedence of all other ambassadors, and French spies and emissaries without number wearing the republican cockade and received with honours at all popular meetings, as the enlighteners of mankind, will require all the vigilance of Government and the wisdom of Parliament to prevent or check the natu-

ral consequences among the factious of our own country. Measures more and more vigorous may be necessary, and I should feel it my duty to vote for all, which did not go clearly beyond my sense of that necessity, though I might think them not the most skilfully adapted to their own end.

With the power of Mr. Pitt, I never wish to have any connexion. So far from it, my Lord, that I some little time since voluntarily resolved (and signified my resolution) to forego my claims to the first rank in my profession, should a vacancy happen. My motives, not material here, were in part private, in part public. I should endeavour to maintain him in power merely from a conviction, that in consequence of the ground taken by Opposition, and the distemper of the times, the cause of Government in the abstract and our excellent Constitution in particular, cannot be supported but by supporting the actual Minister. Happy, I believe, would it have been for Europe, if the breaking out of the French Revolution had found Mr. Fox in the situation of Mr. Pitt! But while *

* The remaining part of this Letter was not found among Dr. Laurence's papers.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

Bath, Tuesday, Sept 6th, 1796.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

WE shall remain here till this day se'nnight: but I do not know that it is absolutely necessary for you to come hither. It can hardly be without a great hindrance to your business. If, on the whole, you should resolve to accept, I know of no obligations that lie on you except to the D. of Portland—and none of them have been connected with any politicks of this time that I know of. Of course you will say nothing of this to him, until your resolution is in general taken—you will then communicate it to him without seeming to entertain any sense of its being in any event likely to be unpleasant to him. I take it for granted you will explain this matter distinctly to Lord Fitzwilliam. I need not again recommend to you, to let not a breath of air on this business until it is necessary, by your election, if you should take upon the explanation which I think it quite right should be made.

Ever yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Thursday Evening.

MAY your days be many! may they be important! may they be happy! This will make full amends to me, for the fewness, insignificance, and unhappiness of mine. I do not know that I shall stay over to-morrow. I shall go that day if I can; if not on Saturday. I should be very unhappy if I disturbed you, or impeded the course of business, when I know you are at the (I hope fortunate) crisis of your life, and of every thing which can give you an honourable and independent situation. "There is a tide," &c.—follow it. I have either lost or left behind me two sheets at the beginning; they followed those I had sent last and led into the others. This at first mortified me; and in a manner made me despair of the business: but I have recovered it from my memory pretty much to my satisfaction; so far as I have gone; and I think I shall finish it before I leave town. At present I don't want you at all—so stick to your affairs. I am sorry I know nothing at all of Bishop Hurd.

Yours most truly,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXXII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, October 10th, 1796.

I HAVE thought over and over again, and with much coolness, though not wholly without anxiety, on the subject of our last conversation. The more I reflect on the matter, the more I am convinced, that the application you were desired to make is ill timed, and the channel through which it was to be made, ill chosen. If I know any thing of the person who holds the *feuille de Bénéfices*, he would refuse the request; and not wholly without reason, because it was not made to himself directly —and next, your setting out in your new situation, and even before you were in it, with an obligation, which would make you appear dependent or ungrateful, would leave an awkwardness, that I do not wish to see in the gait of your proceeding—therefore, my dear friend, if you have spoken to the Duke, (if my opinion could prevail) you would withdraw your application. If it was a matter in his Grace's own *private* patronage, (for ecclesiastical patronage of his own property I believe he has) I see no objection at all to your doing this; but in an application to a Minister for *Crown* favours through another Minister, it neither can, nor in reason ought to, be put to a private account. I must fairly say, that if I myself held

the Crown patronage in trust, I should think it some degree of breach of that trust, if I gave away its means of influence without any assurance of a return. Forgive my freedom; it arises from the solicitude of my affection. Adieu! Mrs. B. and all here salute you. A thousand thanks for the pains you take about the forlorn hope. I am afraid I have been guilty of a great folly, in extreme age, infirmity and debility, in the jaws almost of death, to encounter the whole power of the world both at home and abroad! Once more farewell.

Yours ever most truly,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO MR. BURKE.

Doctors' Commons,

MY DEAR SIR, Oct. 13th, 1796.

THE *three first* (or the *first three)* half-sheets are worked off. Two more I have now sent, but one intermediate half-sheet I have kept back for your approbation of a slight addition which I have made. In p. 30 (half-sheet E) you have interpolated a short passage. You say, "Let me add, "that if our Government perseveres in its uni-"form course of acting under instruments with

" such preambles, it pleads guilty," &c. &c. I have ventured to soften it a little by introducing a parenthesis: " Let me add—and it is with un-
" feigned anxiety for the credit and character of
" the Ministry that I do add—if our Govern-
" ment," &c. &c. If you do not like these, insert any other words of personal civility to something of the same effect, and let me have them. By having kept that half-sheet back, I do not delay the press at all; only no words must be added or taken away, so as to disturb the whole setting of the half-sheet. In the same half-sheet, p. 31, are the words " *oglings* and *glances* of *fraternity*. Lest this *co-*
" *quetting*," &c. &c. I am afraid here was something of an *incestuous* passion imputed to Britannia; I have put a feebler word, " *tenderness*," instead of " *fraternity*." If you can think of a better word, let me have it.

Oct. the 14th.

A case for opinion interrupted and prevented my finishing yesterday. This morning I have dispatched five more half-sheets. In one or two places a word had slipt out so as to leave the sentence imperfect, which I have ventured to supply. If not quite as you would wish it, when you see it, correct it for the second edition. Some words I have changed, to remove an accidental jingle that offended my ear. I have taken these liberties, in execution of my full powers, with all possible

moderation; but the saving of time was every thing. There is, as I understand, a great expectation of your pamphlet, and Lord Fitzwilliam's speech and protest are preparing your way with admirable effect. I heard to-day, that his reasons had made many converts at Batson's among the monied men. They say there are some things unanswerable in what his Lordship has adduced. The Speaker (who by the way was very earnestly kind in his enquiries after your *health*, not your *book*) yesterday told me, that he thought Lord Fitzwilliam a man of high integrity; no person could say that his Lordship had abandoned his principles. As he laid himself so open, I did not think it generous to press him with a question which I longed to put, "Who then must have "abandoned their principles?"

I enclose you a half-sheet of the original copy which the printer says he never had back from you, and knows not how or where it is to be introduced. I have looked as far as p. 120, in the last new copy and find no place for it; though from the contents of it, it seems as if it ought to come in before, but of that I am not sure. At any rate correct it and send it up as soon as possible, and possibly the printer may be able to arrange it from the clue at beginning and ending.

I shall if possible come to you on Sunday for a day, but I think you had best send this back by the coach to-morrow to Mr. Rivington directly.

George Ellis, I hear, goes or is gone with Lord Malmesbury. I scrawl in great haste. Adieu.

Ever most sincerely
Your grateful and devoted
F. LAURENCE.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

Friday Night, 10 o'clock,
18th Nov. 1796.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I HAVE been out of sorts for several days past, but have not been so much weakened by that circumstance as I might have feared. I don't desire long letters from you, but, I confess, I wish a line now and then, I mean very near literally, a *line*. The present state of things, both here and in Ireland, as well as abroad, seems to me to grow every moment more critical. In Ireland it is plain they have thrown off all sort of political management, and even the decorous appearance of it. They had for their commander in chief * * * *, a person utterly unacquainted with military affairs beyond what was necessary for a quartermaster-general in a peaceable country—He had never seen war, hardly in any image, but he was a man of a moderate and humane disposition, and one, from whom no acts of atrocity were to be apprehended. In order to remove him from the command of the

army, they have made him a peer. This was a step to the appointment of * * * *, to the full as little experienced in any real military service as * * * * but younger and of far different dispositions. In case of an actual invasion, they could not expect any thing whatsoever from his military skill or talents. The only proof they had of either has been in his desperate promptitude, without either civil, criminal, or martial law, to seize upon poor ploughmen in their cottages, and to send them bound where he thought fit. By what he is capable of and by what he is incapable, they shew in what manner it is they mean to provide for the military defence and for the civil tranquillity and happiness of Ireland. They have fomented a spirit of discord upon principle in that unhappy country—They have set the Protestants, in the only part of the country in which the Protestants have any degree of strength, to massacre the Catholicks. The consequence will be this, if it is not the case already, that instead of dividing these two factions, the Catholicks, finding themselves outlawed by their government, which has not only employed the arm of abused authority against them, but the violence of lawless insurrection, will use the only means that is left for their protection in a league with those persons who have been encouraged to fall upon them, and who are as well disposed to rebel against all government, as to persecute their unoffending fellow citizens.

The Parliament, encouraged by the Lord Lieutenant's Secretary, has refused so much as to enquire into these troubles. The only appearance of any enquiry which has been, is that put into the hands of a person, I mean the Attorney General, one of the avowed enemies and persecutors of the suffering people, and in the closest connexion with them. I see that the affections of the people are not so much as looked to, as any one of the resources for the defence of Ireland against the invasion which the enemy will make upon that country, if they have force enough to do it consistently with their other views; but, I confess, that from the least reflexion I am able to make in the intervals of pain and sorrow, I do not think that the invasion of either of these countries is a primary object in their present plan of policy—their views seem to me to be directed elsewhere, and their object is, to disable this country from any effectual resistance to them, by alarming us with fears for our domestic safety. They have gained their ends compleatly. The arrangements, which we have made and are making in both kingdoms for that safety, provide for it in the worst possible manner, whilst they effectually disable us from opposing the enemy upon his larger and real plan of attack —We oppose to his *false* attack the whole of our *real* strength. I have long doubted of the use of a militia, constituted as our militia is; because I do not like in time of war any permanent body

of regular troops in so considerable a number as perhaps to equal the whole of our other force, when it is only applicable to one and that but a very uncertain part of the demands of general service. Whether I am right or wrong may be a question with persons better informed than I am, but it has been my opinion at least these twenty years. If I did not declare it in Parliament, it was because the prejudice was too strong to be prudently resisted; but when danger comes, strong prejudices will be found weak resources.

Whatever the merits of militia may be, I am sure that no prudent persons with whom I have ever conversed have been of opinion that it ought to be extended beyond the old number. Other ideas however have prevailed. The infant resources of Ireland have been exhausted by establishing a militia there, upon the feeble plan of the militia *here*, and with consequences much more justly to be apprehended from an abuse of that institution. Whether with regard to the œconomical and civil effects on the military, they have now in both kingdoms added immensely to that erroneous establishment, if erroneous it is, and have thereby doubled the weakness instead of augmenting the strength of these kingdoms. I believe it will be found, that in both countries there is, by personal service or by public charge, the burthen of an army forming or formed of at least fourscore thousand men utterly unapplicable to the general service of the country, or to the conservation of

what I shall ever think as much for its being as self defence itself, I mean the safety and liberty of Europe. The very idea of active defence, the only sure defence, which consists in offensive operations against your enemy, seems wholly to be abandoned.

I know it will be said that these corps do not bring upon the nation the burthen of half pay—This is true but in part, and in my opinion, if war should continue, it will become less and less of an object. At any rate it will be found as œconomy a very poor resource to make out such a saving by the limitation of effect and service.

I do not mean to say that such little aids to the police as by an occasional use of a yeoman cavalry, which is in the nature Marachausée, is much to be condemned. If the service is not much, the charge is not ruinous, and our military arm is not crippled. In my opinion, the expense of these arrangements would furnish such a subsidy to Russia, as would enable that power to act with such a body of troops against the common enemy, as to do more for our real defence than from any home arrangements that we can make. I have said enough upon this subject, though by no means all that is in my mind; but if you agree with me in principle, your own thoughts will more than supply my omissions.

I have suffered great uneasiness from another scheme, the tendency of which evidently is (though I am of opinion nothing is less intended) totally

to disgust the people with the continuance of this war—I mean that part of the people upon whose soundness and spirit the very being of civil society at this time depends, that is, that part of the people who live with a degree of decency upon an income not likely to improve. They are the part of the community which are naturally attached to stability and to the resistance of innovation, but are not qualified to afford pecuniary resources to the State. They may serve to furnish a contingent in the way of taxes which is to be supplied as their income accrues, or as their œconomy finds supply, but they have no hoards, and if you apply to them for a forced loan, you drive them into the toils of the usurers, who will disable them from paying what they are already charged to the support of the State. Sure it were better to borrow directly at a high interest, that is at the interest of the public necessities, and to lay upon those men their share of it, than to take this perplexed circuitous course, which, in the end, will weaken public credit by destroying most of the private credit of the kingdom.

I was going further, when my friendly Amanuensis reminded me that it is near 10 o'clock; I am afraid I have tired you, though I tire myself somewhat less by dictating a sheet than by writing twenty lines—However, one is more wordy when one dictates. I intended if I had time, to tell you that Keogh is come to London, and to wish

to have yours and Lord Fitzwilliam's, as well as Mr. Windham's thoughts upon the subject of his journey, when I know better of what nature it may be. He shews a very great desire of seeing me and conversing with me upon the subject of Ireland. I have fought it off by giving him very true reasons, that is to say, my feeble state of health, and the *contempt* that is entertained for my opinions, especially in what relates to Ireland. —He tells me he has not been with any minister. He is a man that on the whole I think ought not to be slighted, though he is but too much disposed to Jacobin principles and connexions in his own nature, and is a Catholick only in name—not but that whole body, contrary to its nature, has been driven by art and policy into Jacobinism, in order to form a pretext to multiply the jobs and to encrease the power of that foolish and profligate junto to which Ireland is delivered over as a farm. I shall let you know further about Keogh when I hear from him; and I shall send to Lord Fitzwilliam his letters to me, as well as a copy of my answer to him—I shall send you another copy—Good night.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXXV.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Nov. 22d, 1796.

In my last, endeavouring to answer, however shortly, every topick of your letter, I forgot what I previously had intended to have requested. I think it the best way for a publick man to study every thing of an interesting nature, which rises into notice, whether he intends to take an active part in the question or not. What is read at such a moment makes a tenfold impression. You would particularly oblige me, if you would send me the fragments of the review, which you once made, of the laws against the Irish Catholicks. There is also a bundle of printed papers on the question lately agitated, which I tied up myself and left on one of the shelves in my room at Beaconsfield. Will you desire Mr. Nagle to look for it. I believe he will find it on the second shelf from the top in that book-case by the fire which is on the side furthest from the window. The whole together may be sent by the coach. The Oxford coach with two horses is the best, as it comes to an inn not far from hence, and where my name is known.

I congratulate you on Sir Edmund Nagle's new success. I shall be contented, that he should

succeed against me too, for I am just going to argue a cause against him, where the merits are clearly with him. We shall never be able to get our ship and cargo out of his clutches, so I shall feel true christian resignation for once to the decree of Sir James Marriott, and only wish the stake was more valuable.

Did you ever see any thing go on—or rather stand still—like Lord Malmesbury's negociation? By the way is it not pleasant, that one of the French papers, after describing the severe and impressive look—not the flickering smiles which you were pleased to suppose—of our dignified solicitor of disgrace, actually compares him to the *Jupiter tonans!* He seems to me rather in the weeping character of the *Jupiter Pluvius*; or perhaps there is another Jupiter whom you adore, and whom you may think his Lordship still more resembles, the *Jupiter stercoreus*, according to the epithet which the pretended fragments of Orpheus give him, of the "*dung-dweller.*"

I have heard from two or three quarters that private letters from our ambassador's train represent France as very much depopulated. It is said, you hardly see a man in the vigour of life. There are none but old men and boys.

This morning I received a very anxious letter from poor Wilde, which I enclose you. I shall answer it shortly and kindly, but I am afraid of his correspondence.

Adieu! I am just going to set all my sails to escape with my ship and cargo, if I can, from Sir Edmund Nagle.—The cause is opened,—but will not be finished to-day. Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully

And affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I know not, whether you saw in the Times of Saturday, a copy of the treaty attempted to be forced upon the poor Pope. It is a fine specimen of moderation. It was put into my hands by a *noble and learned friend of yours and mine*, and I sent it to the paper. I spoke to Mr. Cullen to impress it a little on the public, but he could not in that paper, as he told me.—Your letter to Keogh, I will return to-morrow.—Remember me to Mrs. Burke.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Beaconsfield, 25th Nov. 1796.

I HAVE heard at last from Mr. Keogh: by his letter, which I enclose, you see the cause of his delay. He is not offended, but he says not one word of Tone his secretary, but probably reserves an explanation of this for conversation. As it will be of much more importance that you should hear

what he has to say, than that I should, I think to write to him by this night's post to call upon you, or if his health should not permit it, that you would call upon him at your first time of leisure. I intend to tell him, that weak as I am I shall see him if he pleases.—Not a word from Lord Fitzwilliam, which I am rather surprised at, knowing that in general he is punctual, and that these affairs are very near his heart.—What you say about the Pope is very striking, but he and his Troy will be burned to ashes, and I assure all good Protestants that whatever they may think of it, the thread of their life is close twisted into that of their great enemy. It is perfectly ridiculous, in the midst of our melancholy situation, to see us forswearing this same Pope lustily in every part of these dominions, and making absolute war upon him in Ireland at the hazard of every thing that is dear to us, whilst the enemy from whom we have most to fear, is doing the same thing with more effect and less hazard to themselves. For we are cutting our own throats in order to be revenged of this said old Pope. It is very singular, that the power which menaces the world should produce in us no other marks of terror than by a display of meanness, and that this poor old bugbear, who frightens nobody else, and who is affrighted by every body and every thing, is to us the great object of terror, of precaution, and of vigorous attack.—You remember the fable of the

Hare and the Frogs. On this point, I verily begin to believe that Mr. Pitt is stark mad; but that he is in the *cold* fit of this phrenetick fever. I agree with you, and it was long the opinion of our dear departed friend, that Mr. Pitt, keeping an underhand and direct influence in Ireland to screen himself from all responsibility, does resolve on the actual dissolution of the empire; and having settled for himself, as he thinks, a faction there, puts every thing into the hands of that faction, and leaves the Monarchy and the superintendency of Great Britain to shift for themselves as they may.

Mrs. Burke passed but a bad day yesterday, with much bilious vomiting and a head-ache, but the latter is gone and she has had a very quiet night, though not much sleep; and though not up is light and easy.—As to myself, I have had four fits in the night and several yesterday—Between the fits, both in the afternoon and at night, I had rest enough.—I send you this by the coach, and am affectionately

Yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Beaconsfield, Wednesday Morning 11 o'clock,
MY DEAR LAURENCE, Nov. 1796.

I HAVE had a bad night, and am very faint and feeble. I do not know where the abstract you mention is in the chaos of my papers, but if I get a little stronger this day I shall look for it; but I send you the printed papers, which Nagle has just found. You know that the far greater and the most oppressive part of those laws has been repealed. The only remaining grievance which the Catholicks suffer from the *law*, consists in certain incapacities relative to *franchises*. The ill will of the governing powers is their great grievance, who do not suffer them to have the benefit of those capacities to which they are restored, nominally, by the law. The franchises which they desire are to remove the stigma from them which is not branded on any description whatever of dissenters in Ireland, who take no test and are subject to no incapacity; though they [are] of the old long established religion of the country, and who cannot be accused of perverseness or any factious purpose in their opinions, since they remain only where they have always been, and are, the far greater majority of the inhabitants. They give as good proofs of their loyalty and affection to

Government, at least as any other people. Tests have been contrived for them to purge them from any suspicious political principles, supposed to have some connexion with their religion. These tests they take; whereas the persons, called Protestants, which protestantism, as things stand, is no description of a religion at all, or of any principle, religious, moral, or political, but is a mere negation, take no tests at all. So that here is a persecution, as far as it goes, of the only people in Ireland, who make any positive profession of the Christian faith; for even the clergy of the established church do not sign the thirty-nine articles. The heavy load that lies upon them is, that they are treated like enemies, and as long as they are under any incapacities, their persecutors are furnished with a legal pretence of scourging them upon all occasions, and they never fail to make use of it. If this stigma were taken off, and that, like their other fellow citizens, they were to be judged by their conduct, it would go a great way in giving quiet to the country. The fear that if they had capacities to sit in Parliament they might become the majority and persecute in their turn, is a most impudent and flagitious pretence, which those, who make use of it, know to be false. They could not at this day get *three* members out of the *three hundred*, and never can have the least probability from circumstances of becoming the tenth part of the representatives,

even though the boroughs made in the time of James I. for the destruction of the then natural interests of the country should be reformed upon any plan which has as yet been proposed, because the natural interests have been varied and the property changed since the time of King James the First. At present the chief oppression consists in the abuse which is made by the powers of executive government, which may more effectually harass an obnoxious people, than even adverse laws themselves. I do not know whether you are apprized of all the proceedings in the county of Armagh, particularly of the massacres that have been perpetrated on the Catholic inhabitants of that county, with no punishment and hardly any discountenance of Government. All this however is a matter of very nice handling in a British Parliament, on account of the jealous independence of that county. Neither the Court nor the Opposition party I am afraid would relish it, especially, as they pretend or may pretend that the subject is to become a matter of their own enquiry. I have written my mind fully upon this subject to Lord Fitzwilliam, but I have had yet no answer, nor, indeed, hardly could. The Jacobin Opposition take this up to promote sedition in Ireland; and the Jacobin Ministry will make use of it to countenance tyranny in the same place.

As to George Ellis and Lord Malmsbury, the Jupiter and his Mercury, I don't care whether

they are in the clouds or in the dung; but one thing I see very clearly, that nothing above or below will prevent the Ministers from going through their dirty work. What has been written as argument or observation has had no answer, but it makes no impression unless perhaps to confirm some people in the obstinacy of their meanness. Do you know that Mr. Crewe has wrote that the **** perfectly approves every thing in the Pamphlet, and yet he has done every thing or concurred in every thing in diametrical opposition to his principles—He will do so, in every thing that can be proposed of the same nature. What think you of their finding no one but General **** to whom the safety of Ireland could be committed at this crisis. All this must have passed through the ****, who thinks one way, and who acts or is acted upon in the direct contrary way. I am very sick of all these things. As you know Keogh, I think there is no objection to your seeing him, if you can contrive it. I do not know how you approve my answer to him, but I am sure he does not, by making no sort of reply to me.

You will write to Mr. Wilde, and let him know that I have been very ill from time to time, and that you have informed me of his enquiry, and that I am much obliged to him for his solicitude about me. The terms prescribed by the thieves of the Directory to the Pope are what might be

expected. He cannot help it, being intrinsically weak in himself, and we have refused to put him in a better condition, for fear of the statute of Premunire; and our fleet has thought proper to fly out of the Mediterranean, and to evacuate all the strong holds we had in that part of the world—I think [we make] a more *** figure than the Pope. In proportion to the strength of body which is enervated by meanness of spirit—"Oh, impotence "of mind in body strong."—The parcel waits—God bless you.

If you can [get] Bollingbrooke's Abridgement of the Irish Statutes, which is extremely well done, you will see the materials upon which I went in the abstract of the old Popery Laws, which I gave to the D— of P— on his going Lord L— to Ireland. My poor Richard had a complete copy, which he put into the hands of the Committee, with such alterations and additions as they thought proper.

Adieu.—Mrs. Burke has had a bad night as well as myself. Doctor Brocklesby has been here and is gone. Parochial news we have none.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Dec. 2d, 1796.

WHILE the evidence is reading in the cause of Sir Edward Nagle's capture, I cannot but snatch the opportunity of dropping you a line: if possible I shall come again to you on Sunday with poor Woodford, who, I am afraid, grows daily worse.

Tuesday last I had Mr. Keogh with me the whole morning. He was a little too ambitiously displaying his oratory. His great object was by a long detail to satisfy me how moderate the views of the Catholicks in general and his own in particular had always been—Of course there was not a word glancing at Mr. Tone. He professed to think that the gratification of the Catholicks would instantly make every thing easy and safe in Ireland, but despaired of any thing being done for them, or of finding any benefit from the interference of any person on this side of the water. His object, he said, was to impress men of liberal minds and publick situations here, that if any bad and fatal consequences should ensue, the blame would not rest with the Catholicks. Some of his details of former events were important and striking. He is to be with me again to-morrow; and means shortly to visit you.

Yesterday I received a letter from Milton. Lord F. to whom I submitted my opinions on the new

loan, is desirous that I should express them in the House. But I have now some doubts, from the alterations of the scheme, making it a little less objectionable, though in principle the same, and the spirit of the subscription which promises to produce in two days more money than is wanted, and of course to render the principle of a *forced loan* nugatory till the Greek calends. On the other side, what we have seen on this occasion in the city is a new argument against the misconduct of Ministers, in not exciting a people so ready to obey their call. I should be tempted so to use it, if I had previously got over the decorous modesty, candour, and insipidity of a maiden speech. There is, I find, some good stuff among the young members, if they were collected together under a head, and they look toward Windham.

Have the goodness to inform Nagle, that on Monday, as soon as I came to Town, I had a conversation with Woodford, and another in the evening with Mr. Windham, both of which will I hope give him pleasure. I shall tell him the particulars when I see him. Remember me to Mrs. Burke. God bless you both.

Ever yours gratefully and devotedly,

F. LAURENCE.

P. S. I just hear that ten millions are already subscribed at the bank. Persons cannot get up to the books. There is absolutely an overflow.

Such is the alacrity of the City, in support of the Government, that it is probable the whole loan will be filled by the Capital alone.

The ship is just condemned to Sir Edward Nagle; or rather to his squadron. Further proof of the cargo is ordered.—There is an appeal from the condemnation of the ship immediately entered.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Dec. 9, 1796.

THE Budget day was a matter of great speculation, Pitt rather less insolent—Fox as furious as I expected. Grey has come forward and taken a sort of lead—Sheridan heads, I suppose, a corps de reserve. Tell me in three lines your remarks upon the general temper of the House on that night and on this. A fine business this of La Fayette. Good God! among all the imprisonments, confiscations, murders, and exiles, to find no one object for a British House of Commons to take up but Citizen de la Fayette. I see Fox proposes the repeal of the two Anti-Jacobin Acts—What do you think of making your debût upon them? Lord Fitzwilliam concurred in them. Unless perhaps you think that that ground is a little worn out. I think the taxes on the whole, if likely to be productive, are unexceptionable—The house-tax is the worst.

Why did not Pitt tax the lower teas?—a small duty would not have been felt, and surely tea-drinking, though it would be idle to restrain it, is not an object of direct encouragement amongst the lower orders of the people. Good night. My [pains] have raged all yesterday, all last night, and a great part of this day with tenfold fury, but a vomiting came on me, and I am a good deal easier this evening. Once more adieu. Mrs. Burke's affectionate compliments. I wrote to you by the coach yesterday.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XL.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, December 10th, 1796.

WHEN I wrote yesterday I did not know the event of Thursday's debate. Some part of it I caught accidentally, but thinking the stoppage of supplies a question which Opposition would hardly venture, as the most unfavourable to them, and considering the little which I heard from that side only as a strong protest, that they might afterwards take up the business seriously at a better opportunity, I went away to talk with Woodford in consequence of your letter, and dine with Adey to meet Mr. Duncombe. I did not like Mr. Pitt's

defence, which I heard. He took better ground on the same point the day before. He then stated it as an irregular act which he hazarded, knowing his responsibility but not doubting his duty, when the service could only be so done in the choice of difficulties under which he laboured, from the exigencies of our ally on one side, and on the other the publick terror on account of the scarcity of money at home. On Thursday he tried to find something of principle in other discretionary and indefinite expenditures, chiefly from exceedings of allowed and known services, which instances I thought by no means analogous; and he attempted to bring it within the authority of the vote of credit, by an interpretation never before put on the usual general words of the Act passed to give the vote effect. If he did, what he did, really to hearten the Emperor, and feared that our pecuniary embarrassments might have made it dangerous to declare it at the time, I should be disposed to indemnify, praise, and thank him, but not to sanction the thing as a quiet precedent. Observing however (I have not seen the paper itself) that the chief payments have been in the two last (if Malone were by, I must say the *last two*) months of the present Parliament, and while we were courting the Regicide, I suspect the secresy was as much occasioned by a fear of attack about the insincerity of his overtures in that quarter. As it is impossible for me to come to

you to-morrow, and the subject may and will be again before the House, I would thank you for your sentiments upon it. At least tell me how far my general impression is right.

Opposition seems to be disposed to be violent. I observed to Anstruther that if his friends did not take care they would get head. They gave tongue with alacrity. The Minister's troops were flat.—Sheridan I did not see on the Budget day. He was there, but did not speak, on Thursday. He seems to be now an *Ex-Ex*-Chancellor of the Exchequer.

There seemed on the whole to be a good spirit in the House. On the Budget day, whatever Pitt said that was animating, as to the courage and resources of the country to effectuate the safety of Europe, our own glory and permanent advantages, was well-cheered. Fox on the other hand was heard in dead silence, when he endeavoured to attribute the zeal shewn in the late loan to a desire of peace. These were indications which might have been nursed into something, were there not a conspiracy to enfeeble and break down the spirit both of the representative and constituent bodies.

What you see in the papers, is true, relative to an American vessel, laden with 20,000 stand of arms and cannon, having been taken on a suspicion of being bound to Ireland. She was a good emblem of *American peace*,—her name was the

Olive-branch, with *a covered cargo of arms.* Have you heard any thing from Mr. Keogh, or had any other intelligence about Ireland?

Give my most grateful and affectionate remembrances to Mrs. Burke; and believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Ever most warmly and devotedly yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. Opposition are nibbling at you. Fox misquoted you one day, Grey had a scrap of you the next. But they do not venture to face or glance at any one part of your doctrines.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Admiralty Court, Dec. 15th, 1796.

I GAVE my vote in the minority with the most perfect conviction possible in my own mind. The precedents nothing, or, in their fair construction, rather the other way in point of authority. They were brought forward with great parade, and in fact instantly abandoned by the amendment, which stated the measure to be justifiable only under the circumstances, and not to be drawn into precedent, unless (here we go back again) in cases of special necessity, which according to my political philosophy, have nothing to do with precedents, but must be justified by their own merits. Did you

ever know such miserable confusion and perplexity. And this was made still much worse by introducing the mention of the vote of credit, which having been passed into a law could not admit of a violation justified by necessity, which is a supercession of law. Could you imagine that my old school-fellow Bragge, who moved the ministerial amendment, was bred to the law, and is a studious and sensible man? The facts of the case were stronger than I could have supposed. A sum of about 308,000*l.* had been advanced to the Prince of Condé before the vote of credit had passed. Before the end of the last Parliament and after the vote of credit, Opposition called for the distribution paper. There were no issues in it to the Prince of Condé, but some to the Paymaste. of the Forces, nearly but not exactly to the same amount. The former have since been introduced, and the latter transferred to the Army Extraordinaries; so I think it was stated by Opposition and not denied by Ministers. Part of the sums in question had been brought to account among the Army Extraordinaries. The amendment went only to monies issued under the vote of credit. But it was explained by the mover, that however entered in the Treasury accounts, if the whole sum was not more than the amount of the vote of credit, it was to be taken as covered by the latter. That again is a good principle of account to be advanced by a lawyer interpreting a law. As Mr. Rose is

going to resign, I think (without meaning any thing derogatory to the talents of his intended successor, Douglas) that no man can worthily take his place, but Mr. Larkins.—Alas! the absurdity of all this will force a laugh, but the consequences of all this trick to the country would make me very melancholy, if I chose to indulge that disposition.

I was in the back part of the House. Very full as it was, it was impossible for me to get an opportunity of saying some few words as I wished,—unless I had purposely and ostentatiously put myself forward with apparent malice prepense.

God bless you and Mrs. B. whom I hope you found well.

Ever sincerely, gratefully,
And affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. My nature is rather abhorrent from managements of great principles. If it were not, last night would have been a very sufficient lesson. I hope it will have its proper operation, where it may be yet useful, if it does not take another effect, and frighten him out of attempting any thing good in any way. The latter, I fear, is the more likely event.

LETTER XLII.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, 16th Dec. 1796.

SINCE you were so well able to reconcile it to your own mind, I am exceedingly glad of the part you took, and of the manner in which you have taken it. I am sure that in a debate in which two speakers occupied more than seven hours, it was impracticable for you to come out with any effect. You will have, I am afraid, but too many opportunities of explaining yourself upon this question. Whenever such opportunities occur, I hope you will distinctly mark the difference you make between the political application of the money, and the mode of proceeding which has a tendency to affect the authorities and duties of your House. I think it is visible as the meridian sun, that Fox takes up the œconomical and constitutional part of the question in order to embarrass the political. I therefore submit to you, whether what you shall hereafter say, should not be rather an explanation of your former vote, and in support of a renovation of a further proceeding in the same spirit and for answering the same bad purposes. The House, whether right or wrong, has decided, and the continual reiteration of this question under new shapes can answer no other purpose than to render all assistance to our allies impractica-

ble and odious. If I were in Mr. Pitt's place, this error, or necessity, or whatever it may be called, or may be, would only animate me in my cause, and give me an opportunity of putting the whole matter to issue by an early proposition of giving vigorous assistance to the Emperor and to Russia, specifying the sum not to be exceeded, and leaving the mode of the application to the discretion of the Crown. For I think that Mr. Pitt was in the right in securing an application of this money to its immediate and proper object. But I am afraid, with you, that he would rather be defeated on the Rhine or *Po*, than suffer a badgering every day in the House of Commons. How did that great lawyer your worthy colleague **** vote on this occasion? I suppose that the learned chief justice did not wish to precipitate his re-election. I take it for granted that you have written to ****. A shortish letter might probably be best, as I see that his mind grows to be ulcerated and inflamed, and that little is wanting to make him again precipitate himself into the Fox connexion—therefore the business is a little critical. To do any thing which might greatly encourage or seem earnestly to lead to a dissuasion from such a step, would equally, though in different ways, tend to goad him to it. At the time while I am now lying on the couch, you are in the middle of your Fayette debate. The Chancellor was of opinion that this Fayettism ought to

be driven out of the House with indignation and scorn; and he agreed with me in thinking that it never was brought thither but for the purpose of bringing his favourite original authors of rebellion into play again, as forming such a link as would best unite the Jacobin factions in the two countries. Good night; God direct and guide you. I passed a very bad day yesterday, the very worst I have ever had: To-day, I bless God for it, I am a good deal better, and Mrs. Burke is certainly not worse. I find Mr. Sheridan has made an attack on Mr. Pitt about the pensioner. It is poor stuff; and if I were to judge of his speech by what appears in the newspaper, it had a great deal more of smoke than fire in it.

Ever affectionately yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

I take it for granted that Sheridan will let fly one of his forty-eight pounder philippics at Windham, and that the fort of the latter will be defended by no outworks.

LETTER XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, 18th Dec. 1796.

I SEE that it was perfectly impossible for you to come in with your Fayettic on the last debate, though I am really vexed that you had not the

opportunity. There was no room for you, but in answer to Fox; and Dundas was not to be stopped, as it was very essential that some person in ministry should take a more direct and manly line than Mr. Pitt thought proper to do. After that, the thing was impossible. I think, however, that they are so eager in their Fayettism that they may furnish you with another occasion, because they will be incessant in their attacks upon the Emperor, and will take up the cause of the alliance with rigour and decision. Mr. Windham came out with great manliness and his usual ability; and I am very glad to find by you that the House felt on that occasion as it ought.—I had but an indifferent evening yesterday, and this day has been one of my *worst*. Mrs. Burke is, I think, rather a trifle better to-day. You talk of our poor Woodford as better, and I trust in God he is so; but I did not at all like the way in which I left him. The operations which are performing upon him seem to me to be in the highest degree critical and dangerous. Pray let me hear from some one or other how he goes on. God bless you.

Ever yours,

E. B.

21257

LETTER XLIV.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Dec. 19th, 1796.

THE enclosed letters will speak for themselves. That addressed to me you will find most satisfactory. To explain one part, you are to know that I proposed if the vote of credit was moved in general terms, to amend it by moving an instruction from the House to insert (if it was in a Committee), or (by moving) to insert (if in the House) a specification of the purpose of appropriating it to Austria according to the discretion of Ministers, as thinking and meaning to admit their late mode of remittance to have been the best. The words of the King's Message on Saturday are now full and clear.

I learn that the E. of Russia is dead. I may allude to it, if I speak, as I should have been for noticing the omission of that ally in the vote of credit.

Your account of yourself afflicts me. Adieu, in great haste.

Yours ever most gratefully and devotedly,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XLV.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Beaconsfield, 20th Dec. 1796.

I BEGIN to have very little hopes of poor Woodford, and I shall feel his loss very deeply—even at a time when I can have very few objects in life, and very little of life for my objects. I expect every moment to hear that all is over with him.

As you lawyers pretend not to love circuits, and as you were desired to communicate Mr. Grattan's Letter to me, I transmitted it directly to Lord Fitzwilliam with my first thoughts upon it. I do not in the least see what can be done. It is directly contrary to my opinion, both with regard to the truth of the fact, and to the impression that it will make in Ireland and here, to charge the English Government with being the cause of all the evils of Ireland. This, you see, is the ground upon which Grattan justifies English interference. ****'s failure will serve only to give new credit to the assertions of the United Irishmen upon that subject, and will lead further and further to an alienation of the minds of that people from this country. What documents are they **** can call for, which will justify his motion; or what papers can he call for from the D— of P's office, which, if granted, would not mili-

tate against it. I stated this, and somewhat more, at large just now to ****. I believe the common people, and the most active of the orders next to them, have lost (as **** in a former letter said they have) all confidence in the leading men. I can readily believe the fact, without imputing blame at least to Grattan. It is impossible for a man to keep the good opinion of the Castle without running all the length of absurd tyranny, or to preserve the affection of the discontented without going the full length of the most frank Jacobinism. It is the alternative, *exactly* on that side of the water, and in a degree, though a much smaller degree in this country. When you come to speak on *Pitt*'s message—But I recollect the business is over—I was going to say, that you would do well to make on a contracted scale a pretty political map of Europe, if you have not yet done it—occasions enough will be open to you. What do people think of the disposition of the new *Czar?* It is common in that country, still more than in any other, to make a change in the political system in every new reign. I doubt he will never make himself so well obeyed as his mother has been.—Mrs. Burke, I thank God for it, is better of her usual complaints, and I am not worse. I walked to-day, though in the midst of a very bad fit, to the amount of about two miles. I find young Elliott is come over on the occasion

of his mother's death. I suppose you have not yet seen him. Adieu. God bless you ever.

E. B.

LETTER XLVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Beaconsfield, 25th Dec. 1796.

I AGREE with you, that the footing upon which the Ministers had put their negotiation, involves them in difficulties with regard not only to the Opposition, but to themselves and their sole ally, and to the sole ally which they had hopes of acquiring, as well as to the miserable inhabitants of the islands who had incorporated themselves upon our faith into the British empire; and who never henceforward can strike a blow with heart either in their own favour, or that of our feeble and perfidious Government. Surely, this business will give you a fair opportunity of coming forward. You cannot appear with more lustre or at a better season, for explaining the silent vote you have given, as well as in asserting the principles which might seem to be rendered doubtful by that vote. I suppose Lord Fitzwilliam will come up in consequence of the Duke of Bedford's motion, if not upon the message.—Pray send me word by the coach whether it went down yesterday, and if it did not, when it is to be looked for.—It is

a very extraordinary thing, that merely because Lord Malmsbury, in execution of his wretched and contemptible office, proposed to keep two places that we had taken, and not from France, that he should be turned off at eight and forty hours notice. Good God, what were the humiliations which the President de la Rouillie and the Marquis de Tolcy suffered in Holland, in comparison of this. They never were sent away at all; on the contrary, though their offers were not received, they were invited in the most pressing manner to stay. I fear the nation is not equal to this trial, and that having been once kicked, they may think they may as well be kicked on to the end of the chapter. "Rome, thou hast lost the breed of "noble bloods!" and Lord Malmsbury will be found, at least I greatly fear it, a true representative of the people of England. Adieu, and many happy returns of the season. We are sorry not to have had you at our turkey and roast beef. Alas! the times have been, when you would have found a more full and cheerful family, but I was unworthy of it, and have lost it by my own fault. Learn from me never to trifle with such blessings as God may give you. I forgot to speak to you about Mackintosh's supposed conversion. I suspect by his letter, that it does not extend beyond the interior politicks of this island, but that, with regard to France and many other countries, he remains as frank a Jacobin as ever. This conver-

sion is none at all; but we must nurse up these nothings, and think these negative advantages as we can have them. Such as he is, I shall not be displeased if you bring him down; bad as he may be, he has not yet declared war along with his poor friend *Wild* against the Pope.

Ever, ever yours,
E. B.

The accounts from poor Woodford seem to be a little better. This weather is sadly against a case and cure like his.

LETTER XLVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Beaconsfield, 28th Dec. 1796.

THE declaration, though it has not astonished me, has not given me great defection of spirits. There is a sort of staggering and irresolution in the cowardice of others, but there is a sort of unconquerable firmness, a kind of boldness, in the pusillanimity of Mr. Pitt. His madness is of the moping kind, but it is not the less phrenzy for being fixed in lowness and dejection. He is actually taking every means to divest this country of any alliance or possibility of alliance, and he is determined that no spirit shall arise within this country, not knowing what course that spirit might take. I do not know whether I ought to be glad or not, of

Lord Fitzwilliam's coming to town. I think it is impossible to attack Pitt for want of sincerity in this negotiation; though for wisdom it cannot be defended. I do not wonder that they endeavour to struggle for a port in the East Indies, and for a half-way house at the Cape, for unless they had made Holland truly independent and fixed her in attachment to us, these places would be virtually given to the French, and we could not maintain ourselves in the West Indies, out of which at some time or other they mean to drive us. When I say I do not wonder at it, I am so far from approving it that my soul abhors it, but I much more abhor their fatal system, out of the perplexities of which nothing can disengage them, but their totally abandoning it. I am glad that the business is put off to Friday, because your cold may then become better. This thaw favours your recovery. A cough is not to be trifled with, especially in a full habit like yours. Unless a physician had dissuaded it, I wished you had been blooded. I wish you to take advice: that bleeding may yet be useful.

Mrs. Burke and myself, though neither of us passed a good night, are not worse to-day. God bless you. The times are bad when experience does nothing towards the correction of error.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Feb. 2d, 1797.

I HAD written to you on Monday, but luckily too late for the post. Otherwise, my letter, which was worth nothing, would have been travelling after you from Beaconsfield to Bath.

Windham, with whom I dined yesterday, told me that he should certainly set off to-day, to join you at Bath. I have this moment sent him two letters for you. One is from the Count de Chatillon, of whose subsequent arrival at Jersey I have heard this morning. The other is from a member of the Assembly of New Brunswick, who desired it might be delivered into your own hands by his correspondent, but it was intrusted to me in consequence of your absence from Beaconsfield. The business I in no respect know.

My interview with Windham yesterday was for the purpose of talking over my intended motion. We chatted about the several parts of it, and from his friendly discussion and disceptation upon the subject, I shall acquire several useful hints as to several points of the execution. Very shortly (the first leisure day from professional business) I shall draw out my resolutions in full form, and send them to you: I shall probably a little enlarge them from the sketch of them which

I mentioned to you. The phrase in His Majesty's pacifick message of December 1795, I find to be more clear than I had supposed. It is not "capa- "ble of maintaining the accustomed relations of "amity and peace:"—but "*compatible with the* "*safety of other nations*, and having power to "maintain its engagements;" or something to that effect, including both their principle, and their stability. The other phrase is in the declaration of Oct. 1794, but there it is coupled with another phrase also clear: the passage stands—"*founded* "*on principles of universal justice, and capable of* "*maintaining the accustomed relations of amity and* "*peace.*"

I have recommended to Windham to carry with him in the chaise, and to leave with you, a book of very various description. The whole is useful as a manual; the former part (about three-fourth parts of the book) is in general very sound and good. The last sixty or seventy pages are very miserable. It has a most lame and impotent conclusion. The purpose is to cover up as well as the writer can, Mr. Pitt's conduct of the war, and he is cut short in the result of all he had been writing, by Lord Malmesbury's negociation. It is dated on the 1st of October, and all the latter part was probably written after the application for the passport was known. At this unravelling of the plot, the author, I doubt not, must have felt like Fielding when he damned the inventor of fifth

acts. I suspect (but it is only a suspicion of my own) that the work is from the pen of Gifford, who wrote the answer to Lord Lauderdale. The title of the book which Windham will bring you is "An Historical Essay on the Ambition and "Conquests of France." Pray lounge over it.

Present my best remembrances to my dear Mrs. Burke, and my congratulations on the good accounts which I have received of you both. I am exceedingly obliged to Nagle for his kindness to me, and beg him never to trouble himself about an apology for the shortness of his letters, but merely to write to me as long or as short letters as his time will allow. I am anxious to hear about you, and had rather have a single line than wait another post for a whole sheet.

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER XLIX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, February 8th, 1797.

THE accounts which I have received of you, since your last visit to town, are on the whole highly satisfactory to my mind. Altogether you enjoy

more ease, your little relapses seem to be less violent, and I think less frequent; your appetite, which at one time failed you, is now good; and your strength and flesh, if they do not yet perceptibly encrease, have not latterly continued daily to diminish. Nagle, to whom I beg you to present my very sincere acknowledgements for his attentions to me, has not informed me whether you have yet begun upon the waters.

I am happy to hear that Mrs. Burke gets so much better. It gives me double pleasure, as I think it the best proof of her reliance on your recovery. The immediate sympathy which she so plainly manifests, between her health and yours, will I am sure always be the most powerful and indeed an irresistible motive with you to be solicitous about yourself, and to think, as far as it is in your own power, rather of those who still remain to you, and who depend upon you for all their future comfort here, than of those, whom the inscrutable dispensations of Providence have removed, against the course of nature, before you to enjoy sincere and eternal happiness above.

I hardly know how to advert to any inferior consideration after this topic, in which my pen ran before my intention. But the enclosed letter I purposed sending to you two or three days since. I had heard that Lord Spencer and some other good-natured friends had informed Windham of Lord Fitzwilliam's attack on the Quiberon expedition in

the last debate. The explanation which occurred to me, ignorant as I was of the actual words used, I gave from my knowledge of his Lordship's sentiments. I also wrote to him on the subject, and you now will see his answer. In thought, expression, every thing, it is truly worthy of the writer, if my partiality does not deceive me. You will communicate it or not, as you think best, to Windham. The substance of the whole I wish him to know, but there are some phrases which might a little jar upon his fine nerves.

I am in great haste, as I am collecting my materials for the re-assembling of Parliament, and am besides overwhelmed with professional occupation. I am going to-morrow before the Lords of the Treasury. Your old friend Sir Fletcher Norton, once called Double-fee, is nothing to me—I am on *seven different sides* of the same question. I am almost to act a whole comedy alone.

Remember me to my dear Mrs. Burke, and believe me to be,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully and
affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I hardly ever saw so audacious a composition as O'Connor's address.

LETTER L.

TO THE SAME.

Feb. 9th, 1797.

O Rem ridiculam, Cato, et jocosam,
Dignamq; auribus, et tuo cachinno!
Ride, quicquid amas, Cato, Catullum.

AND yet I doubt whether I should so begin, for there is one tragical incident in my story. You may have heard that a great Dutch House in the city, that of Muilman, Nantes, & Co. has failed. The occasion is now the talk of the Exchange. They had in their hands 44,000*l.* received from Holland on account of *Mrs. Hastings*. This was confidentially entrusted to them during the trial. Now Mrs. Hastings (I suppose wholly without the knowledge of that innocent and persecuted man her husband) began to enquire a little too pressingly, when it would be convenient for Messrs. Muilman & Co. to transfer into her own name (I know not whether *Imhoff* or Hastings) the stock which she supposed to have been purchased with her money. It was all gone. I am sorry to add, Mr. Muilman, finding an exposure of his affairs unavoidable, shot himself; his partner has disappeared, and the house has broken to pieces. Very few annas in the rupee are expected to be recovered.

Remember me to Mrs. Burke. I am just returned from arguing on seven different sides, and have a noble Lord just come to me as a client on another interest in the same cause. I scrawl in very great haste. Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully and

affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LI.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, Feb. 10th, 1797.

I HAVE been very weak for some days past, and so giddy that I am hardly able to walk across the room. At the first coming on of this bad symptom I was not able to do so much—so that I am not without hopes that it may go off, though, take me on the whole, I am without all comparison worse than when I came hither, but yet the violent flatus's have not been quite so troublesome to me since the complaint in my head is come on. They have taken the town, and are now attacking the citadel—But enough of this. The affair of Mrs. Hastings has something in it that might move a third Cato to a horse-laugh, though the means, I am afraid, by which she and her paramour have made that and all the sums which they have got

by their own dishonesty, or lost by the dishonesty of others or the confusion of the times, [might cause] the laughing Democritus to weep as much as his opponent: but let whoever laugh or weep, nothing plaintive will make Mr. Pitt or Mr. Dundas blush for having rewarded the criminal whom they prosecuted, and sent me and nineteen members of Parliament to prosecute, for every mode of peculation and oppression, with a greater sum of money than ever yet was paid to any one British subject, except the Duke of Marlbro', for the most acknowledged publick services, and not to him if you take Blenheim, which was an expence and not a charge, out of the account. All this and ten times more will not hinder them from adding the Peerage, to make up the insufficiency of his pecuniary rewards. My illness, which came the more heavily and suddenly upon me by this flagitious act, whilst I was preparing a representation upon it, has hindered me, as you know, from doing justice to that act, to Mr. Hastings, to myself, to the House of Lords, to the House of Commons, and to the unhappy people of India, on that subject. It has made me leave the letters that I was writing to my Lord Chancellor and Mr. Dundas, as well as my petition to the House of Commons, unfinished. But you remember, likewise, that when I came hither at the beginning of last summer, I repeated to you that dying request which I now reiterate, That if at any time, without the danger of ruin

to yourself, or over-distracting you from your professional and parliamentary duties, you can place in a short point of view, and support by the documents in print and writing which exist with [me] or with Mr. Troward, or yourself, the general merits of this transaction, you will erect a cenotaph most grateful to my shade, and will clear my memory from that load, which the East India Company, King, Lords, and Commons, and in a manner the whole British Nation, (God forgive them) have been pleased to lay as a monument upon my ashes. I am as conscious as any person can be of the little value of the good or evil opinion of mankind to the part of me that shall remain, but I believe it is of some moment not to leave the fame of an evil example, of the expenditure of fourteen years labour, and of not less (taking the expense of the suit, and the costs paid to Mr. Hastings, and the parliamentary charges) than near £.300,000. This is a terrible example, and it is not acquittance at all to a publick man, who, with all the means of undeceiving himself if he was wrong, has thus with such incredible pains both of himself and others, persevered in the persecution of innocence and merit. It is, I say, no excuse at all to urge in his apology, that he has had enthusiastic good intentions. In reality, you know that I am no enthusiast, but [according] to the powers that God has given me, a sober and reflecting man.

I have not even the other very bad excuse, of acting from personal resentment, or from the sense of private injury—never having received any; nor can I plead ignorance, no man ever having taken more pains to be informed. Therefore I say, *Remember.*

Parliament is shortly to resume the broken thread of its business—if what it is doing deserves that name. I feel the same anxiety for your success as if what has been the best part of me was in your place, and engaged as he would have been in the same work, and I presume to take the same liberty with you that I would have done with him. The plan you have formed, like all the plans of such comprehensive minds as yours, is vast, but it will require all the skill of a mind as judicious and selecting as yours, to bring it within the compass of the apprehensions and dispositions of those upon whom it is to operate. There would be difficulty in giving to it its just extent in the very opening, if you could count even upon one person able and willing to support you; but as you will be attacked by one side of the House with all its force, reluctantly heard and totally abandoned by the other, if you are permitted any reply at all, a thing which under similar circumstances has been refused to me, it will not be heard by the exhausted attention of that House, which is hardly to be kept alive, except to what concerns the factious interests of the two discordant chiefs, who

with different personal views, but on the same political principles, divide and distract the nation. But all this I must leave to your judgement, which, with less parliamentary experience, has infinitely more natural power than mine ever had, when it was at the best. This, only, I shall beg leave to suggest, that if it should be impossible (as perhaps it may be) to bring your opening speech within any narrow compass, such as two hours, or thereabouts, that you will make your reply as sharp, and pointed at the personal attacks that I am sure will be made upon you, as you can; and that you will content yourself with reasserting the substance of the facts, declaring your readiness to enter into them if ever you are furnished with the means. I have no doubt that in the course of the debate, or in this session, you will find opportunities to bring forth what your discretion may reserve on the present occasion for a future one, when you may be at more liberty. Though I am sensible enough of the difficulty of finding a place in debate for any of those who are not arranged in the line of battle, abreast or ahead, in support of the one or the other of the great admirals. My dear friend, you will have the goodness to excuse the interposition of an exhausted and sickly judgement like mine, at its best, infirm, with a mind like yours, the most robust that ever was made, and in the vigour of its faculties; but allowance is made for the anxious

solicitude of those, whom sex, age, or debility exclude from a share in those combats in which they take a deep concern.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

12th February.

P.S. My health continues as it was when I began this letter.—I have read Erskine's pamphlet, which is better done than I expected to find it. But it is little more than a digest of the old matter, and a proposal to remove all our evils by a universal popular representation at home, by giving to France at once all that we have thought proper to offer, on supposition of concession, and all that she has chosen to demand without any regard to our concession, together with a cordial connexion with her and a total alienation from other powers, as a pledge of future peace. This, together with bringing Mr. Fox into power, forms the whole of the pamphlet. This would certainly make short work of the treaty.—This pamphlet does not make your motion the less necessary, and without a reference to it you may keep it in your eye.—Mrs. Burke, thank God, is better of her cold: She salutes you.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE suppressed the newspapers.—He knows nothing of this disagreeable business; but I am in hopes, from Dr. King's letter to me, that an

injunction will be laid early to-morrow, to prevent the sale, and that you all will pursue such rigorous measures against Swift and Owen, as the law will enable you to do. I had a letter by the coach, informing me of it.—Will you beg of Doctor King to write to Mr. Burke to-morrow, and tell him what he has done in Rivington's business.

Yours truly,

E. NAGLE.

LETTER LII.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Feb. 14th, 1797.

MANY, many thanks for all your kind anxiety about me, and especially in your late long letter. May I prove not unworthy of that sort of implied adoption, which is the honour of my life! Without any second intimation, *I should not have forgotten* it so reminded, in connexion with what followed, I feel it a filial duty to remember. I will not, however, yet receive this as a dying request. Though your account of yourself is very far from satisfactory, yet I will look to the good part of it, that your stomach is rather better: the new symptom in your head does not much alarm me, since it is not an uncommon effect, as I have been told, of the Bath-waters.

Your observations respecting my business perfectly accord with my own purposes. I shall compress the first part as much as I can, so as to put strong and sweeping negatives, throwing the proof on the other side. I have gone through all the debates of the Convention leading to the war with the Emperor. They are decisive beyond my hopes, that the leaders did not pretend in truth to consider the concert of princes (whatever it was and whenever it began) but as *defensive*, and that they especially believed the Emperor to have *wished negociation and not war*. I have the debates abstracted and translated, and shall hold them in my hand, asserting the general result in few sentences, and challenging the proof in detail. I mean my reply to be as sharp as I can make it, avoiding details there also, and threatening, if the House approves, specific resolutions hereafter on all the facts. Novelty and curiosity will probably secure me some sort of hearing. Erskine's pamphlet, which I have, but have not yet read, will give a propriety and life to the first part of my motion.

I am afraid, I have done the public lately some mischief, in my zeal to consult your private delicacies. In your sleep you have done great and good service here without knowing it, but Dr. W. King, Woodford, and myself, with a little stretching of Mr. Rivington's conscience, have stopped your career of fame. Not to keep you in suspense, Owen, by the means of Swift, as I have

been informed, has published a paper of yours, which is very much admired, wherever it has been seen. It is the paper, of which I got the original rough-copy from Swift, if I recollect right, about a year ago, and of which, on my giving him a lecture and a guinea, he assured me that he had kept no transcript. In reality it was your justification to the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam for pursuing your own line of conduct, when they chose to concur in the vote of *confidence* from the Whig Club to Mr. Fox. By Dr. W. King's active exertion, on Mr. Rivington's oath of his belief that the production was yours, we got an injunction yesterday, *the very day of publication*, and gave public notice in the papers of this day. Some copies (and I believe a considerable number) did however get abroad in spite of us. Accidentally coming out at the very same time with Erskine's, it crossed him in many and indeed most of his principal topics, and it is thought, fairly laid him on his back.

The Duke of Portland (Dr. King says) is perfectly at ease on the subject; and I wrote yesterday to explain it to Lord Fitzwilliam.

From the complaints, which I hear of the publication being stopped, I am almost willing to desire that a correct edition may be given, the consent of the Duke and of Lord Fitzwilliam, of course, being obtained.

Besides the injunction against Owen, we are preparing a bill of discovery against Swift, to get from him all your papers, and an injunction against the publication of any of them.

I write in great haste; having just returned from the Treasury, and now going down to the House. Remember me to Mrs. Burke, and believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully and affectionately

Your faithful and devoted

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LIII.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 15th Feb. 1797.

ON seeing the advertisement in the newspaper, all newspapers and all letters have been kept back from me 'till this time. Mrs. Burke opened yours, and finding that all the measures in Dr. King's, yours, and Woodford's power had been taken, she ventured to deliver me the letters of to-day, which were read to me in my bed about two o'clock. This affair does vex me, but I am not in a state of health at present to be deeply vexed with any thing. Whenever this matter comes into discussion, I authorize you to contradict the infamous reports

which Doctor Brocklesby tells me are given out by the Opposition, "which are, that this Paper "had been long circulated through the Ministry, " and was intended gradually to slide into the "Press." I never had a clean copy of it but one, which is now in my possession, and never communicated that but to the Duke of Portland, from whom I had it back again. But the Duke will set this matter to rights, if in reality there were two copies and he has one. I never shewed it, as they know, to any one of the ministry. I never gave a copy of it even to Lord Fitzwilliam. If the Duke of Portland has really a copy, I believe his and mine are the only ones that exist, except what was taken by fraud from loose and incorrect papers, by Swift, to whom I gave the Letter to copy. As soon as I began to suspect him capable of any fraud and breach of trust, you know with what anxiety I got the loose papers out of his hands, not having reason to think that he kept any other. Nor I believe in fact, unless he meditated this villany long ago, that he did [possess] or now possess[es] any clean copy. You [may] tell this to Brocklesby, to whom I have not time to write. I never communicated that paper to any one out of the very small circle of those private friends from whom I concealed nothing. But I beg you and my friends to be cautious how you let it be understood, that in disclaiming this publication and circulation, I do not retract any one of the sentiments contained in that

memorial, which was and is my justification, addressed to the friends for whose use alone I intended it. Had I intended it for the publick I should have been more exact and full. It is written in a tone of indignation against the resolutions of the Whig Club, which were directly pointed against myself and others who seceded from that club, which is the last act of my life that I shall ever repent of. Many temperaments and explanations there would have been, if ever I had a notion that it should meet the publick eye. But no wonder that such villains as Owen should proceed as they do, when our courts of justice seem by their proceedings to be in league with every kind of fraud and injustice. They proceed as if they had an intricate settlement of 10,000 a year to discuss in an affair that might as well be decided in three weeks as in three hundred years. They let people die while they are looking for redress, and then all the proceedings are to begin over again by those who may think they have an interest in them. While one suit is pending, they give knaves an opportunity of repeating their offences and of laughing at them and their justice, as well they may. I wish heartily that, if the lawyers are of opinion that they may spin out this mockery a year or two longer, I may not vex my dying hours in fruitless chichane, but let the villany, which their maxims countenance, take its course. As to any relief in the other courts,

I have been in them, and would not trust the fame and fortune of any human creature to them if I could possibly help it. I have tried their justice in two cases of my own, and in one, in which I was concerned with others in a publick prosecution, where they suffered the House of Commons in effect to have the tables turned on them, and under colour of a defendant to be criminated for a malicious prosecution. I know them of old, and am only sorry at my present departure, that I have not had an opportunity of painting them in their proper colours. Why should not the Court of Chancery be able to know, whether an author gives an imperfect copy to a printer to be published whether he will or no, and has not left himself master of his own thoughts and reflexions? This is the very case made by the wretch himself, but a court can't decide in years whether this thing ought to be done or not. In the meantime he enjoys the profits of his villany, and defies them by villanies of the same kind and to the same person. But I allow that it is better that even this kind of justice should exist in the country, than none at all.—Adieu. I am now in my third dose of physick which I have taken in the course of thirty-six hours. The symptoms of my disease are quite changed. I have hardly any excitation, but my strength, rest, and flesh, are gone. Nothing goes through me. I cannot walk alone from my couch to my bed. The giddiness is not the effect of the Bath waters, for

I do not drink them, nor have except for two days in the beginning, and when I had no giddiness. The opiates I have totally left off. Yet things remain where they were. I am perfectly satisfied with my physician, both in point of skill and profession; but nature is too strong for him, and I grow worse hourly.—What day is fixed for your motion? I suppose the Opposition have not neglected this affair of Ireland, and the Ministers well deserve whatever may happen, from the insolent manner in which they received the warnings of Mr. Fox, particularly as what he said was no more than a repetition of what they chose to forget.

Yours ever,

E. BURKE.

LETTER LIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 5 o'clock. [1797.]

I SHOULD be sorry that you and **** differed. I hope you have wrote to him the state of your mind. The question is delicate and difficult, even though it were not complicated with collateral considerations of no small weight. The abstract merits of the question are with the Opposition—the political consequences of carrying it are not less certain; but I think there is little danger, especially after the declaration of the Irish Parliament,

that it should be carried. In my opinion you may vote as you feel, without injury to your honour, one way or the other: And therefore, perhaps *.**.*'s opinion ought to turn the scale. But, on this point, I am no way confident. The neglect has indeed been shameful, and has been owing to Mr. Pitt's absolute disbelief of any such intention on the part of the enemy, notwithstanding his having received very sufficient intelligence upon that head. I enclose to you in two other covers, a letter I have received from Sir Lawrence Parsons.* If I had had heart and strength enough, I should have answered it, and sent it to ****, but certainly not to be communicated for the purposes of Opposition, that would be a breach of trust. Assure him of my sentiments of gratitude in my extremity, and communicate the letter with these cautions (unless you feel some objection) to ****. I should think there was less difficulty in your case, if I did not think that the same question will infallibly be agitated in the House of Peers, and the part which **** will take can be little doubted. I don't like that all his members should be found voting against him. But again, God direct you—Adieu.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

* This letter was received by Mr. Burke Feb. 9th.

LETTER LV.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Feb. 20th, 1797.

YOUR letter and the subsequent account from Nagle which I received on Saturday, very sincerely and deeply afflicted me. Yet I will not lose my hope in the mercies of Providence, not to you, but to the remaining fragments of your family, to your friends, and to your Country: If the Supreme Disposer of all has yet employment for you in doing good, he will preserve you for his own season. Your symptoms do not to me seem desperate, but alarming they certainly are, as indeed I should think any new turn of your disorder, because it would bring a new danger, the extent of which it would be difficult immediately to estimate.—Nothing from Nagle to-day. It is the first time that he has given me the most distant reason to complain; but after the two last accounts, it would have been kind to have written had he any thing comfortable to say: it would have been some satisfaction even to have heard that you are not worse.

I have several times reproached myself for not having answered your letter for three days. But in truth it was morally and almost physically impossible. What you authorized me to say, I have circulated without appearing to be stu-

dious of doing it, as I have never met with the suggestion mentioned by Dr. Brocklesby.

Mr. **** has written a foolish letter in some of the papers, generally denying the charge, but the denial is very equivocal. The charge stated by himself is, that he was guilty of a treasonable misdemeanor; by denying this, it has been observed by his own friends that he *may only have denied the law*; he means therefore to justify himself more specifically.

You are very curiously defended — by *Mr. Miles!* He had alluded in one of his pamphlets to the same charge against Fox and Adair. The latter has now spoken very contemptuously of him, and has roused a sleeping hornet.

Erskine's pamphlet I have by different mighty efforts forced myself to read half through. I never saw in the same space so many glaring errors, and so many palpable misrepresentations of facts. My copy is pretty fully noted, and I wish to put it into the hands of Nagle's friend, Mr. M'Cullen. Will you be so good as to desire Nagle immediately to write to him, and beg him to call upon me Wednesday about noon? I will also thank Nagle for his address.

Mr. Whitbread has given notice for a motion for an enquiry into the late measures for the attempted invasion of Ireland. It stands for Friday. I am afraid that I shall be wished to go a little beyond my own opinions. My line would be, according to

my own feelings, to disapprove the neglect of the real defence of Ireland by neglecting to conciliate the affections of the people, and to make them a very efficient member of the confederacy against Jacobinism; to argue offensive measures to be the only safe defence; to doubt the vigilance of administration on the late occasion, but to decline an enquiry, because if they should be found undeserving of confidence, there is no party to whom the confidence of Parliament can be transferred. It cannot be bestowed on men who are always maintaining the justice of France against England, and thinking of peace only as affording an opportunity for changes in the Constitution. I think this ground might be made impressive. But I know not how it might please in a quarter, where I should be sorry to give the least dissatisfaction. If I did what I have sketched, I should do it with assertions of the general constitutional doctrines about confidence and enquiry against my own determination in this instance, but I should rest my conduct on the strange disjointed condition of the times; and I should throughout express myself with regret, as considering the disqualification of Opposition for the government of the country, as one of the greatest evils. * I have a considerable doubt on the score of prudence, whether it may not a little take off from the effect of my own motion, by depriving me of the advantage of novelty. Whatever I do, or do not, I shall feel

myself a little the stronger, as I have this day paid my own election bills of nearly £.500 at Peterborough.

As to my own motion, I purpose to bring it forward on Monday the 6th of March. It is the first leisure day which I have from professional business after our term, which does not end till the 2d; and Friday the 3d is occupied by Mr. Fox. The Admiralty Court will sit all March, except on Mondays and Saturdays; so that if I cannot have the 6th, it must go to the next Monday. The end of this week I hope to send you my Resolutions. I shall a little enlarge the scheme of them, to include most if not all the Parliamentary declarations of principle, because many of them have been quoted in a most garbled and distorted manner by Erskine. I shall meet his falsifications, but without professedly particularizing them.

Adieu, my dear Sir! I must go to the House, where it is supposed a message may come relative to the intended invasion, and a loan; but I speak from common report, not from any authority. I am, my dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully and
affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, Feb. 24th, 1797.

SINCE the receipt of your last letter, I have not had a moment's leisure: I now take advantage of a long reading of voluminous evidence in the Court of Admiralty to scrawl two or three lines.

The system, on which your physicians are now proceeding, approves itself very much to my reason. I remember also, that it is the system, which my youngest Brother (who is a medical man) suggested to me for your case, when I was talking to him on the subject some little time since. My principal fear was your want of strength to bear the necessary discipline. But to my great surprise and satisfaction, if I can trust Nagle's accounts, you seem to receive strength from every fresh evacuation. I begin again to have strong hopes, which at one moment had nearly forsaken me, that Providence will yet spare you to us. I consider you (like the emigrant clergy and nobility of France) as a sort of pledge of mercy to us from the Divine Disposer of all.

The enclosed letter will speak for itself. There is one point, you will perceive, on which I have now for the first time extorted a *reluctant assent*. Yet the concluding reasoning almost starts away from it again. I cannot comprehend how a peace

made by Fox would more save the national honour than a similar measure conducted by Mr. Pitt. Would any State of Europe believe it a choice? Would it in fact be so, on the part of the nation? Certainly not. Neither do I see any thing dishonourable in laying down your arms, when resistance is impracticable, or success is desperate, if that be the case, which I deny, but which Mr. Pitt will certainly declare to have been his reason for making peace, whenever he shall have made a peace. On the other hand, Mr. Fox's negotiation, I think, would begin by stamping an indelible brand on the national honour; for the preamble, which he and his friends always tell they mean to prefix, is a humble confession of our injustice in the origin of the war, and of our participation in a plot against the liberty and territory of France, which (whatever we may chuse to do for ourselves) we have no right to confess for our past and present allies. When a negotiation had even been *attempted on this principle*, how long after could we expect the Emperor to remain firm to his alliance with us against all the temptations, which the republicans have thrown, and will throw out to him again?

The question announced by Opposition is narrowed to an enquiry into the conduct of the war, in one particular instance. They have also threatened a general enquiry. If I vote for one, how can I in common consistency oppose the other, as

I should be inclined to do on account of the certain political consequences? In reality it seems to me (if I do not refine too much) an ambuscade laid to take **** prisoner, that his name and authority may be used on other occasions for higher objects. I shall write a managed reply to the enclosed a little on that notion. If there was not some such view, as I suppose, I cannot conceive, why Opposition so circumscribed their own ground to the conduct of Ministers, WHILE THE FRENCH WERE OFF *Ireland*.—Remember me to Mrs. Burke; and believe me,

My dear Sir,
Every most gratefully, faithfully,
and affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I have been, during the writing of this page, listening to a speech which I am to answer.

LETTER LVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Admiralty Court, Feb. 28th, 1797.

THE accounts, which I heard yesterday, coming both from Mrs. Crewe and from Nagle, were very satisfactory, and console me for not hearing myself to-day. They tell me, my dear Sir, and I am desirous of believing them, that your strength is gradually encreasing. That is the best possible

symptom. It does not look like some of your former variations in appearance, which were quite *journalieres*. Yet I shall not be surprised or alarmed to hear some days hence of a little temporary relapse, so that you do not on the whole fall back, as was the case just before and immediately after you arrived at Bath.

Mr. Whitbread's motion did not come on yesterday. It now stands for Friday, which of course throws Fox back to Monday, and me necessarily to Monday se'nnight, for which day I shall give notice, unless by negotiation with Fox I can get next Monday.

Yesterday we had only conversation and a motion of Sheridan, arising out of the situation of the Bank. The latter seemed to me very injudicious. I thought that even Fox went too far by giving notice that he should feel it necessary on the enquiry into the funds of the Bank for the purpose of securing their notes, to graft another enquiry into all the past transactions between the Bank and the Minister. I thought that his tone should have been in common policy, subdued, solemn, even alarmed at the state of the country, professing a desire to take all measures which the exigency might justify for the support of our credit, and postponing personal considerations, with an intimation that he should afterwards move for a new committee, or new instructions to Mr. Pitt's committee to go into a fuller enquiry, that the

whole financial state of the nation and the management of the treasury might be known. But he plainly shewed himself to have hardly any feeling but the ruin of Pitt.

Sheridan I thought still more indiscreet. His motion was, that "no money should be issued to "any foreign Prince, till after an enquiry into "the causes of the present situation of the Bank;" or something to that effect. And more than half his speech was a furious invective against the Order of Council suspending payment in specie, till Parliament could be informed, against which he pointed no censure in his Resolution, and which did not in the least apply in argument to his Resolution. The minority however had some votes, and of persons connected with the Bank. Sir J. Sinclair, I was told, went out with them.

The embarrassment of the Bank was in consequence of an extraordinary drain in specie. A great alarm has prevailed particularly in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, from a report, that one great object of the intended French expedition is to burn the collieries. The bankers of Newcastle therefore drew out almost all they had in London, and drew it in hard cash. Other country banks were preparing for similar calls upon them. The former failure of many country banks was remembered by tradesmen, farmers, and others, and thence also there was an unusual demand of cash.

There was a meeting of tradesmen and bankers in London yesterday; and very numerous and respectable signatures immediately put to a resolution of taking and paying as much as they could in Bank-notes. Stocks in consequence rose nearly 3 per cent at one time, and more than 2 per cent at conclusion. There was a very good spirit shewn in the city, and the Jacobins were very angry. But there was also some dismay and a good deal of weakness apparent in the midst of the little buoyancy of the meeting and the rise of stocks.

The invasion of Wales is hardly intelligible. No man from the accounts can make out the plan; whether it was to alarm us, whether it was of a predatory nature, or whether it was to burthen us with so many prisoners, to be fed now at our expence and afterwards to encrease the confusion in the event of an actual invasion.

I am in very great haste. Adieu. And believe me,

My dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully and

devotedly yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LVIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, March 3d, 1797.

THERE is great intelligence in town from Sir John Jervis. You will of course have it in the papers. With fifteen sail of the line he engaged twenty-seven of the Spanish fleet; took two ships of one hundred and twelve guns each; one of eighty, and another of seventy-four. They were going, I believe, to join the Brest fleet. Thank God, that is for the present prevented, and it is a most important point. The mere appearance of a more numerous fleet of the enemy in the channel would have completed the pusillanimity, dejection, and despondence of this paltry country. I was deceived the other night by Bastard, who talked of stout measures, when he and the whole sixteen of the armed neutrality voted against Mr. Pitt. The next night they staid away from the sequel of the same question. The talk of stout measures excited my curiosity to enquire what they meant. I did not do it directly of themselves; but have been informed that their stout measures meant only *taxing the people.* As to war or peace, they are some of the worst in the House.

Lord Fitzwilliam comes to town this evening. I am to see him to-morrow, when he will inform

me of "the particular cause of this expedition." He stays very few days.

I write in great haste and amidst confusion, from the Court of Admiralty. My work here all the morning long will, I believe, prevent the possibility of my speaking about Ireland, which I had revolved in my mind.

Remember me to Mrs. Burke; and believe me to be,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully and
affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I am sorry to find by the papers, that G. Ponsonby has declared *Parliamentary Reform*, total emancipation of the Catholicks, and complete freedom of the Channel-Trade, to be necessary for the re-establishment of confidence between Ireland and Great Britain—Grattan declared the same. I do not wonder, but regret.

LETTER LIX.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 5th March 1797.

I AM extremely pleased that, under whatever disadvantages of time and preparation, you have made your debût; I am pleased likewise with the short reply you made, and it was sufficient to the miserable buffoonery which was the only answer

that could be made to you. I shall send you as a postscript to this, a copy of what Mr. Windham has written to Mr. Nagle on occasion of that commencement. You do not tell me how you voted on the Irish question. Since you could not be heard till 3. o'clock, I am glad you did not attempt to speak, though I much approve the line you proposed to take. The invasion of Ireland, as an unforeseen event, could not be better provided for; but it was an event that ought not to have been unforeseen. Herein is placed the true *gist* of the question. As to the armed neutrality who were coquetting with you some time since, 'tis, I conceive, composed principally of the persons of which it was formed in the last Parliament. They are a body without sense and without principle, and are and can be true to nothing. They are utterly unfit to form that third party of your constituent and your country, which you hinted at with so much propriety. If any of them speak a word to you again upon any publick business, you ought to answer with all the coldness and reserve that is possible. I look upon *Tiers* parties to be in themselves things very critical, sometimes very necessary, but that cannot, and perhaps ought not, to endure long. That division of party, which I loved and trusted, did for some time form that tertium quid; but, through the error of the excellent person who then led them, they were, or rather he was,

not neutral, but perplexed and inconsistent. When it joined Ministry, it neither could or ought to preserve its neutrality, but it ought to preserve its credit and coherence, and to have given a new bias to the body to which it was aggregated. How that came to fail we all know but too well. I am far from being sure that time and events may not make up a new party, but it can never be from altogether the same elements. I am exceedingly mortified at this scheme of issuing small paper. Still more so at the repeal, or temporary suspension, which will lead to more suspensions, of two most salutary Acts of Parliament made to prevent the abuse of private credit, which abuse so strongly militates against the use of public credit, and perhaps, now at this time more than ever. It prevents all possible operation of the certain remedy which the evil would have furnished to itself. Had I been in Parliament and in my strength, I should most certainly have spoke and voted against these, I apprehend, fatal measures. All the circumstances of Sir John Jervis's affair render it a very brilliant piece of service, but still the naval power of the common enemy is not materially impaired. The French armament from Holland is a serious matter, if we have no fleet in the Downs, as I suspect we have not. At any rate it is sufficient to prove the utter insufficiency of a passive defence, whether by sea or land, for the protection of these countries, or

for sustaining their credit!—As I have now some moments of ease, though more reduced in my flesh than ever, and that I fall away every day, I have a mind to anticipate in part, the work I was preparing, and in a letter to you or to some other friend, if you should think it not adviseable to address it to you, I might give rather results, and conclusions, than formal detailed discussions against the plans of armament which can end in nothing but our ruin. All these false and ill-understood precautions against danger serve only to augment the publick alarm, to waste the resources of the country, and to destroy the vital principles of publick credit. How comes it, that we have no established course of intelligence, which I am sure, easily might have been had, in Holland; but I strongly suspect that amongst all our expenditures very little is laid out in this way.—To say a word of myself, though falling away to a shadow, I find my little strength rather increased, than impaired, and my nights, thank God, are unusually good—not having had a bad one for these last four past, and the two last quite as good as in my best health. I am taken once in about seven or eight days with a vomiting, which gives me great temporary relief, but contributes at the same time to emaciate me more than any thing else, even more than the purging, which is the only means by which I can be kept open—For I don't know what the medium is, in this respect. God bless you. Remem-

ber me affectionately to Lord Fitzwilliam, and with all gratitude. Mrs. Burke is better of the rash which had broken out upon her, and she does not seem, thank God, to be in other respects worse.

I am ever

Most affectionately yours,

E. B.

Extract from Mr. Windham's Letter to Mr. Nagle.

" Dr. Laurence's first performance, you may " tell Mr. Burke, succeeded perfectly well. He " keeled a little in the launching; which gave " me some minutes anxiety. But he soon righted, " when he touched the water, and shewed, as he " is, a grand first rate."

LETTER LX.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, March 7th, 1797.

I PERFECTLY agree with you as to the difficulty of making or of keeping together a third party. I agree also as to the persons, of whom only a third party is now to be made. Strictly speaking, a third party is not what I should wish to see formed. My only view would be to hold out to Ministers and to Opposition, that there are men who would support the Minister stoutly, if he would do his duty, or transfer that support to

Opposition, if they would be candidates for power on fair terms, consistently with the honour and interests of their country. Such a third party as I would make, if I could, would be to be dissolved, the very moment that they had made themselves seen, heard, and felt. But there is not the most remote chance of such a party. Ten good men and true would be sufficient, but half the number cannot be found. There is a little troop collecting, perhaps thirty, forty, or fifty, of a very different description, most mischievously weak. They are afraid of Fox and his friends; they wish to save Mr. Pitt, and they are now angry with him because they think him obstinate in wanting really to continue the war and refusing to negociate (as they say) with an emissary of the French now here. I have had a conversation with one of them. They are to have a meeting, and want me to attend it; and to give up my motion of course. The latter I decidedly refused to do; as to the former I neither agreed or dissented.

The repeal of the two bills restraining the issue of small notes by tradesmen, did not please me; but it passed without notice. I really did not know the fact, that there was such a bill in the House, till I heard it read (short of course) a third time, and the ayes in the common form declared to have it.

Adey wants to have bank-notes declared a legal tender, as many Jacobins demand gold and threaten

to bring actions. The whole situation at present is full of difficulties; and I fear that though it is really in its nature and cause no more than temporary, the general tenor of the measures taken and to be taken looks to something like permanency, since they are such as will work themselves into the general system of our public and private credit too extensively to be again easily eradicated. But I really have not had leisure to think over the nature, magnitude, and bearing both of the evil and the proper remedy for it, so accurately as I could wish. Will you favour me with your general view of it, as the great opportunity of talking upon it is yet to come.

What you intimate in your last, of the honour which you intend me, would be most dear to me, but I do not like too much to urge you to exertions which may affect your health.

Remember me to Mrs. Burke. I hope her rash will be beneficial to her general health. It is not an unfrequent consequence.

I have the honour to be,
My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully and
affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I write in great haste, having stolen out of the Admiralty Court for that purpose, while the evidence I am to speak upon is reading.

The French papers say that the greatest efforts are making at Vienna to relieve Italy. *Vienna alone*, though so many of the nobility have to lament relations killed or taken in the late corps of volunteers, raises a new corps of six thousand men. Yet the armed neutrality here say we must not be too nice about *faith and honour*, and such old notions.

LETTER LXI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, March the 14th, 1797.

It is several days since I have directly heard from you, but thank God, Adey communicated to me the substance of a very comfortable letter from our dear Mrs. Burke. Lord F. who will remain here at least a week longer, is very anxious about you from time to time; and I will thank Nagle, especially for this week or so, to be kind enough to write to me a little more regularly. I wish you would scold Woodford for me: He promised me to write, but not a syllable yet have I received from him.

Last night I was dragged up again in debate; at least I could not sit silent. It was on a motion of Mr. Harrison for an enquiry into our offices for the purpose of retrenchment. Mr. Pitt moved the previous question, but—agreeing to instruct his

committee appointed to examine the finances, to enquire also into possible retrenchments of offices. I did not intend to have spoken, being very much dissatisfied with the shabby principle on both sides. But you were the Helen of the war. Fox quoted half a dozen of your works in different ways. It was late, and his speech produced a long and warm squabble between him, Rose, and Canning. These things were unfavourable, but I resolved to notice the more prominent quotations from you.

I took the opportunity of premising my opinions very shortly. I said that I should vote for the previous question, but not the intended instruction, which I thought equally objectionable with the motion. I declared against any of these enquiries, which begged the question of something generally wrong in the whole system, raised an expectation of some great relief to the people, and then left [them] sore with disappointment, as any serious relief from such paltry savings is impossible. Real abuses I would ever assist in reforming; but the evil must be specifically pointed out, its nature shewn, and the safety, propriety, and expediency of the remedy made clear to my judgement.

I considered your œconomical Reform as the very reverse of Mr. Harrison's proposition. It was on a principle of removing influence, not making little savings; it was undertaken in truth to prevent such crude proceedings; which had

been started in another House; you took a view of the whole system; gave your reasons for what you condemned and what you spared, and, in your own language, you heaved the lead every inch of way that you made. Let them proceed now in the same manner, if any new abuses had risen since your bill.

Mr. Fox said the war had been supported by corruption and the influence of the Crown. I reminded him of the associations signed by himself at the end of 1792; his humble explanation of his own conduct in his printed letter to the Westminster electors, and the failure of the Whig Club in procuring addresses for peace; asking him as to each of these instances, if the public opinion proceeded from the influence of the Crown. I then went to his false quotation of your two letters, as sanctioning the opinion that the minority in the late Parliament spoke the sense of the nation. I told him you stated that as conversation, but the whole member on that subject ended with a declaration that you thought otherwise.

He had quoted against Windham a passage from one of your early works, of men leaving their party and their principles on specious motives, and sinking into insignificancy. I enquired if in that passage he found that when two sets of men who had formed one party thought differently, on such subjects as the character of the French revolution, the French faction here, and the justice of

a war with France, (all put at length and rhetorically,) they ought to continue together? Whether he any where found in your writings, that such men acting together, were *a party* at all? Whether he did not find that you called them under such circumstances a faction? Each set of men, I said, ought in such cases to follow their principles, and if they acted from principle, neither had a right to accuse the other of desertion, but both were to be judged by their consciences, their God, their country, the world, and posterity. Fox was very civil to me; he came up to me, and assured me that he thought your writings the best repository of principles, and he accordingly read them all with diligence.—A member near me (I did not know him) was very complimentary to me. Lord Hawkesbury came up, and said he quite agreed with me, as Anstruther also said. Windham told me he was at one time anxious. When I stated the question before, then they expected a formal and long argument, but as I left it in three or four sentences, they then attended very well. Pitt was very gracious to me in the lobby.

Yours ever most gratefully
and affectionately,
F. LAURENCE.

P. S. I have drawn a long state paper, of which I will inform you perhaps to-morrow.

LETTER LXII.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, March 16, 1797.

It is very unlucky that the reputation of a speaker in the House of Commons depends far less on what he says there, than on the account of it in the newspapers. Your speeches, which are made late in the night, supposing no foul play, (which however I suspect) are taken by the journeymen note makers, and when there is not room for them in the paper, even if they were able to follow you. In the late instance, however, this was unavoidable, since you spoke to vindicate the reputation of your friend, which no consideration of prudence with regard to yourself could prevail on you to omit. As you stated [it] in your letter, it must have been very impressive, and as honourable to your abilities, as it was to the goodness of your heart. As to Mr. Fox's speeches, he seemed to have laid [aside] his abilities along with all decency, liberality, and fairness; and placed himself in the rank of the Adairs, the Bastards, and those gentlemen whose cause he supported, and to whose undertsandings, "by an extraordinary alacrity in sinking," he chose to level himself. What he said of me was nothing more than his old song, frequently sung, though with a little more liberality in my own presence, and always responded to

without a possibility of reply. The major part of his topics have been answered by me in print, and the publick must judge between us; but there is one fact, which as it passed fifteen years ago most people may not so well remember; though that too, I discussed with him in the House of Commons without a reply, or the possibility of his making any. He has the impudence to say that the reduction of places that I made was not sufficient, and that more would have been made in Lord Rockingham's and his administration, if time had been given to them for that purpose. Both are absolutely false;—In the first place, any lessening of the reduction proposed in my original plan and that which appeared in the Act, was not of my doing, but of his own, and the cabinet to which he belonged; and I was no way consulted about it, though I certainly acquiesced in it, and, on the whole, thought it sufficient. In the next place, I do solemnly declare that I never heard him, nor any body else of that cabinet, propose any reduction of offices, but of the two, were of opinion that the matter had been carried too far, rather than that it had fallen short of their mark. They must have thought that it did not fall short, because they knew very well that they never could have had an opportunity so favourable for reduction as during the dependence of that bill, and in the flood tide of its popularity. Mr. Fox now thinks that neither this, nor the Pay

Office Bill, nor the Contractors' Bill, which, though moved by another, was left wholly to my management, as it was originally schemed by myself, nor of Mr. Dowdeswel's and my plan, to his and our honour adopted by Mr. Crewe, were of the least significance, in lessening the influence of the Crown in that House, and in the other, or in the Scotch election for peers by the abrogation of the Scotch Lords of Police. I know he told me, and that to the best of my recollection in the presence of others, that the Acts which he now finds to be so very frivolous, were the means of turning out Lord Lansdowne, and that he had lost his question in the same number of votes as the places that had been suppressed. As to those that had been retained, he perfectly agreed with me both in the policy and the justice of retaining them, considering them as I did as right in themselves; and with regard to the holders in possession or reversion, as property, to all intents and purposes. I cannot say exactly in what form Mr. Rose put the recriminatory charge which he made on Mr. Fox with regard to the places of that kind, which Mr. Fox had held, and disposed of. Mr. Fox's reply seems to indicate that he was charged with squandering away their income and value. If so, his reply was proper, because the charge was unparliamentary, and not at all to the purpose in argument. But if it was urged, as it ought to have been, that Mr. Fox had himself

considered those places his property, as an argument ad hominem, it would have been conclusive against him. For if he sold that as property which was not such, by his own admission he was guilty of a fraud. But it were an endless task to go through all the nonsense and ribaldry which he chose to vent upon that occasion. As to his arguing for a change of his opinions from the greater burthens which now exist on the publick, 'tis perfectly absurd—First, because injustice is not less injustice, though it may admit some palliation on account of the necessities of those who are guilty of it; and next, because those remnants of remnants of savings, which Mr. Windham has so justly ridiculed, become more and more contemptible according to their disproportion to the weight of the charge which they are brought to counterpoise. He has used another argument which seems to have more weight, which is, that it may be necessary for maintaining the character and credit of the Opposition; but at a miserably low ebb is that character and credit which is obliged to have recourse to such frauds and impostures. Mr. Pitt was very wrong in giving to them the countenance he had given, and which, after the able speech he had made, was no proper conclusion to be drawn from his arguments. Mr. Windham, in my opinion, even from what I see in the papers, never made a more able and eloquent speech. I particularly admire the manly tone of

scorn with which he treated the miserable imposture of the motion. I thank him heartily for his speech, and subscribe an unfeigned assent and consent to all the articles of his creed. I forgot to say a word about fees, which it seems is one of the articles of charge against Mr. Windham's office. Whether they be exorbitant or not, is more than I can judge, but that they are profitable to the officer is no objection, provided they are not onerous to the publick, or oppressive to those that pay them. This was so much my principle upon the reform, that I carefully reserved the fees to the Pay Office; but in the progress of the bill I was absolutely forced by the frauds of Colonel Barré, acting on the principles of Lord Shelburn, who attributed every sort of publick evil to fees, in a famous speech of his, and by the unparalleled treachery of our own party I was beat out of my plan, and compelled, whether I would or not, to bring from that abolition a charge of £.6,000 a year, or rather more, upon the publick, for the official expences which before had cost nothing, except for the Paymaster's salary and some other salaries, which latter were insignificant. Whether the office has been impaired in its diligence and its spirit of accommodation from that time, is more than I can positively say, but I believe that it has. I am sorry to have troubled you so much on these matters, but as they relate to facts which may not be so generally known, I wish you not

to throw away this letter. I have no objection to your shewing it to any body, but do not desire it to be shewn to any one but Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Windham. As to you, "Macte esto "virtute tua"—don't be discouraged from taking the independent line, which makes you vote with different men, but always upon the same principle, and not like these vile and most abject wretches who compose the armed neutrality; who, if they were not the most contemptible of the human race, would be the most odious.—Thank God, you have but one political friendship to attend to, and in that you will never find any clashing with publick principle.—As you are still solicitous about my health, I am to tell you that to-day has been one of my best days; and though I can't walk without an arm, I have moved about a good deal, at least a good deal for me. Flesh as before. Adieu!

Yours ever, E. B.

P. S. Will the gentlemen do any thing in my affair with Owen—or have they given it up? If they have given it up, why is it so?

PART OF A LETTER, PROBABLY TO MR. BURKE, IN DR. LAURENCE'S HAND-WRITING.

(Most secret.) [No date.]

THE paper to which I alluded, and which I drew up in concert with **** on Saturday and Sunday last, was an intended Representation to the

King, to be signed by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Besborough, Lord Hertford, Lord Moira, and perhaps some others. Lord Abercorn was supposed to be perfectly ready, and the Marquis of Buckingham, as far as concerned the Catholic claims, but not to the point of a change at the Castle. How many actually have signed, or whether it has been or is to be signed and presented at all, I do not know, as I have not seen Lord F. since Sunday. I called in Grosvenor Square on Tuesday evening, and his Lordship the next morning at my house, but we did not meet.

The Representation itself filled about eight sheets of paper fairly copied with a half margin. The heads of it are something to the following effect: Introduction—An extraordinary measure to be justified only by the urgent necessity. His Majesty will naturally take information and counsel from his Ministers in the first instance, but his subjects well know, that He will attend to truth through whatever channel received. The situation and interests of the Subscribers make it their indispensable duty to lay before His Majesty the result of all the concurring advices which they have lately received and are daily receiving from Ireland.

Fact of the disorders in the North; and fears of greater calamities; women, children flying, &c. &c.

Nature of those disorders, arising from inveterate principles rendered more active and dangerous by the circumstances of the present times. Mass of the people there republicans on system.

Disorders of the South very different both in their magnitude and nature. Considerable discontent there, but hitherto little actual disaffection. Inhabitants principally Catholics, who form altogether about seven tenths of the whole population of Ireland. Obedient to the laws, and friends to monarchy from opinions, habits, and prejudices. They remember that their first relief came from His Majesty's own paternal regard to their oppressed state. The nature of the only remaining question explained. The lower Catholics certainly not directly interested, but they make common cause with their superiors, considering and justly considering the existing restrictions as a brand on their religion, and as depriving them of their natural protectors in the state. Necessary also to acquaint His Majesty, that they did not actually enjoy all which His Majesty's gracious disposition towards them and the consequent law meant to give them. Tricks used by the Irish government to defeat the law, and declarations made tending to raise a just alarm for the resumption of the concessions lately granted. Persecution in Armagh. Reference to the testimony of Lord Gosford, a determined enemy of the Catholic name in Ireland. Feelings of the Catholics at

the long indifference of the Irish Government to that persecution.

These the causes of some disturbances, in which the Catholics may have had part; and of the success which the republicans of the North have had in persuading some of the Catholics of their neighbourhood to unite in their projects:—But on the late occasion the great body of the Catholics gave the most striking proofs of their loyalty. Extorted even praise from the Irish Ministers, but their claims immediately treated with insolence and contumely. Impolicy and obvious tendency of such conduct towards such men.—Has not yet produced *all* the pernicious consequences to be expected from it, but has occasioned a sullen indifference to the fate of a Constitution, from which they now find that they are to be for ever excluded.

Catholics anciently thought formidable not on account of their religion, but because they were a political party in connection with a foreign power supported by France. That connection at an end for ever. The Dissenters of the North were the zealous enemies of monarchical France, they are as zealous friends of republican France; and from thence is likely now to be the permanent danger of Europe. The Presbyterians have courted the Catholics and offered them every thing, for a democracy of a majority told by the head would put every thing into the hands of the Catholics.

But the latter have been steady; rebuffed, reviled, and persecuted as they have been, they have constantly wished to prefer a small share (and small indeed it would be) in the present happy Constitution, to the whole power of the state on the new republican models. Danger and difficulty, if these two opposite parties should unite now for the first time in the history of Ireland. Inadequacy of the party of the Established Church—who form not *one tenth* of the population—are the rich, an obnoxious and comparatively helpless class—are dispersed over the whole island—and some of them tainted with the new doctrines. Danger enhanced by the expectation of an invasion.

Remedies—Granting every thing to the Catholics in the most gracious manner; and under the particular circumstances of this juncture, it should be, as much as possible, marked to be the immediate act of the King himself. Necessity also of a change in the government, by dismissing those men who have impeded and contaminated his royal beneficence in its course, and who in no respect enjoy the public confidence.

Apology repeated.—The Subscribers have *many times more interest in the prosperity of Ireland than all the King's servants in both kingdoms.* But that an inferior consideration. What they most dread is, being subjects of republican Ireland and monarchical Britain, which two countries

must then be in most bitter and lasting hostility. Only consolation, having done their duty in this extraordinary manner.

APPARENT ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

[No date.]

I TAKE it for granted that you have not been authorized to communicate to me the substance of your secret letter: so that I am somewhat at a loss how to state my ideas, such as they are, to ****. But you may throw them out as matters for consideration from yourself.

I had a letter from **** not long since, in which there was an obscure and unformed hint of this business. In my answer I wholly mistook his plan. I now see it distinctly. I make no question but, as to the execution, the work is perfect. With regard to the measure itself I have great doubts; first from the attendant circumstances, and then from the dispositions of some of the persons who are to be principally and most actively concerned. Had this remonstrance been an insulated measure, I am convinced it might be very proper; but following immediately on the heels of a Parliamentary motion, the answer (if any) will be, that the King cannot act on the sense of individuals, however respectable, the Parliament in both kingdoms thinking differently. I confess I do not see what reply can legally and

constitutionally be made to this—and I am afraid it will be employed to make much ill blood on both sides of the water. I do not like to have **** much engaged with **** with **** and above all with ****. They are all men of ambition —the first is timid; and the two last very irregular in their ideas; and, in their views full of ambition, and designs, of which self is in the centre. I think it certain, that if any benefit is derived from this, they will take away all the credit; and if it fails (or indeed whether it fails or not) **** will be the victim. I do not like these associates in any design. What turn Opposition in Ireland will take on it I cannot divine. They are running the full length of Jacobinism, and meaning something little short of the disunion of the two kingdoms—they may take this opportunity of making the absentees (as they are called) odious—and I assure you the Court will join with them in the end. Adieu. God direct our friends.

TO MR. BURKE, AT BATH.

(Secret.)

MY DEAR SIR, March 22d, 1797.

I VERY much agree with the contents of your answer to my secret letters; but luckily events made it unnecessary to use the arguments, where they were intended to have effect. It was not within my knowledge, as I told you in my last,

whether any thing had been done, or was actually to be done with the paper of which I gave you the substance. I can now say, nothing will be done with it.

Originally it was designed, as a substantive and single measure, unconnected with any other. The suggestion, as I understood, arose in a conversation between * * * * and the Duke of * * * *, the latter of whom desired * * * * to get something prepared. At that time there was no intention of any motion in Parliament on the subject. On the Sunday, when the paper was nearly finished, * * * * hinted his purpose of moving an address, but it was not actually determined. It struck me, that the two measures would clash. I mentioned accordingly, that if both were to proceed, it seemed to me that some effect might be produced, by making the representation first to His Majesty, and then keeping the debate in Parliament strictly to generals, professing in the present dangerous crisis, from a regard to the public safety, not to be led under any circumstances into details, which might be thought to give encouragement to the enemy. I submitted also, as * * * * stated himself to be in possession of many facts (such as that ninety-one families of his own tenants on a small detached estate of only four little townships were wounded, or banished after having their cabins plundered, burned, and *wrecked*,—that he could bring home to Government a refusal to pro-

tect the Catholics, and positive encouragement to the Orange-Boys, and that many of the banished Catholics, afterwards declined taking the oath of allegiance, declaring that they could not conscientiously swear fidelity to a Government, which had abandoned them) whether it would not be proper to send these details to Ministers, giving his reasons for not using them publickly at a moment like this, but throwing all the consequences on their future responsibility. This combination of measures, I thought, applying differently in different quarters, might have made some impression, not likely to effect much at present, but not to be wholly without use hereafter, if any actual crash short of absolute ruin should be the result; and would, by the moderation of their publick conduct, clearly prove to the King and his Ministers the integrity of their motives. But * * * * was desirous of not being limited in publick discussion. He said, that by *appearing in his place on the side of the people of Ireland, he might save his estate in the event of a revolution.* You will never drop a hint of this. I before knew him for a man of irregular ambition; this shewed him to me in a more degrading light.

The characters of the two other noble Lords whom you mention, I always thought to be what you describe them. The timidity of one drew back, in consequence of the great courage which he now feels from the good news, as he called it,

of the army being employed in disarming by force all the Dissenters of Downe, and I believe the whole North; disarming maritime provinces in time of war and under the expectation of an invasion!—Lord **** thought that no representation could have effect from *himself*, Lord ****, Lord ****, and the D. of **** supporting Opposition as he does in the House of Commons.

LETTER LXIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Admiralty Court, March 17th, 1797.

I AM exceedingly flattered by your approbation of the very dry summary which I gave you. You saw nothing but the mere bones, stripped even of the periosteum, and not even strung regularly together into a tolerable skeleton. What I said, I would rather that you should hear through any other channel;—I mean more particularly what I said (short as I was obliged to be on each individual part) in relation to your plan of œconomical reform.

The facts of which you have now put me in possession—one or two of which are new to me—certainly are important whenever the question may come again, as it most probably will more than once. I did not go into very many topics

on which I wished to have enlarged; principally on account of the late hour; and in part also because I did not get down to the House till Windham was just going to speak, and consequently was afraid of going again over ground better trod before. I had been very busy—the enclosed will tell you how—both Saturday and Sunday evening till one in the morning, and did not get to bed till between two and three. With this and the business of Monday morning in our own profession, I was jaded, and stayed away from the House to take a nap till eight.

Fox's speech was not directly so bad as you seem to suppose; in one sense it was worse; it was disgracefully sophistical. He admitted all his old opinions, and I think toward the conclusion, said that he did not approve the mode of general enquiry; or something to that effect. But this he slurred all over, and then put at length hypothetical arguments, that because your bill had been sufficient in 1782, it was not conclusive that nothing should now be done: *If* any abuses had grown up since; *if* the influence, then suffered to remain had been since found too much; &c. &c.—He then got into personal attacks, and quibbled away so as to give to a vulgar hearer the effect of his having supported the motion, while a fair, candid and attentive judge, in reference to his positions and doctrines, would say that he in principle abandoned it.

Rose's reply was to an attack made on the reversion of his place having been given to his son. This he applied personally to Fox, as having enjoyed a reversion from his father. He used some words which Fox took as alluding to the sale of it; but the words did not necessarily imply that, and Rose declared that he did not mean it.

I shall certainly communicate your letter to the two persons whom you point out. Lord Fitzwilliam will now stay a little longer, as Lord Moira has given notice of a motion relative to Ireland.

Neither of the two occasions on which I have yet spoken, were favourable to my appearance in the public reports, as you indeed remark. But I cannot expect much favour from them, as neither side is very willing (and it would be strange if they were willing) to raise my authority very high. But Fox is pointedly civil to me, frequently crossing the House to talk to me, and Pitt was very gracious as I passed him the other night in the lobby. I attribute this to what I said in conclusion. After explaining what I understood to be your opinions about party, I shortly added for myself, that "I had lived in intimate society with, "and I still entertained considerable affection for, "many gentlemen on the other side of the House, "but thinking with those who had separated "from them, I should ever hold it my public "duty to resist their principles and the mischie-"vous consequences, which in my conscientious

"judgement, their conduct tended to entail upon "their country;" or to that very effect.

While I have been writing, a long argument has been going on. I must now prepare to reply, should the court think it necessary; but I shall catch topics from Sir Wm. Scott.

How is Mrs. Burke? and poor Woodford too? though he hardly deserves I should ask about him. Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXIV.

TO THE SAME.

(Secret.)

MY DEAR SIR, Admiralty Court, March 28th, 1797.

LORD FITZWILLIAM is gone down to Milton, very melancholy as to the situation of things here. Yesterday I received a letter from him, which I enclose. It is kind and friendly in the extreme. He is more anxious for my personal success, than I am myself. I answered shortly, that I came into Parliament knowing that I could only do my public duty by making personal sacrifices. But under the circumstances (not having at present even my seconder, Lord Milton, in town, who has been sent down by

order of Government to his corps in Dorsetshire) I shall wait a little and watch opportunities, if any offer. What are the purposes of Ministers I know not; I believe, they know not themselves. They seem to value themselves, as I understand, on good conduct in suffering the most decisive resolutions to be carried against them without a struggle in the Common Hall of London, and since of Southwark. It is said, they intend to get counter-petitions. But in my judgement, they will fail. If they seriously meant it, they should have made a battle, and then men would have warmly promoted a counter-address. Now all will be flat and languid. They hope, I fancy, to escape the storm by bending before it. Our friend W. speculates that they will grow more shabby. Yet if they find that shabbiness will not do, it is possible, they may from necessity advance one step more towards honesty. Before I determine on my *time*, I shall endeavour to learn what they actually mean.

I have prepared two sets of Resolutions, one longer and more detailed, going through all the Parliamentary documents and every where incorporating the words of Mr. Pitt himself, if the state papers, to which I allude, be, as I suppose them, from his pen. There are *twenty* resolutions in that set. The other consists of *twelve*, containing the marrow of the former set, and admitting just as much argument in speaking as the longer and fuller resolutions. I hope to have copies enough to send

you one of each to-morrow by the coach, as both sets would take up more than my legal number of franks. They will be with a half margin, and I will thank you to make as many remarks as you please.

W. to whom of course I have communicated them, does not think that the Minister will like them. I shall however try to negociate through the Speaker. I am sure I have left every thing open enough for Mr. Pitt. While I shall have an opportunity of stating my sentiments, there will be nothing to tie him up from being to-morrow again as shabby as he pleases; except a little about the Netherlands.

Lord Lansdowne last night declared that he thought "Belgium" ought not to be insisted upon by us: and that is the creed and the object of the armed neutrality. **** with his friends seems now avowedly to have joined Opposition, and I believe that **** in truth was sent for on the late occasion, to be a mediator with Fox, but that scheme did not take. Fox has lowered his tone of late. He said in confidence to **** what must on no account be repeated;—that he thought this the worst time since the commencement of the war for making peace. Till lately he did not doubt the ability of the country to carry on the war for two or three years more. When he was talking with me the other night in the House and some Member near me whose name I know not, I observed

in reference to something from him,—that I had rather hear him blowing a war-point on his trumpet; he paused a little and then answered, that he doubted whether the country could carry on a war for two or three years. Alas! if he were willing, he has put himself in a situation that he could not do it with effect. Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully and
affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXV.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 29th March 1797.

IN reading the Irish debates upon the state of the north of that kingdom, I find that the Chancellor had justified the proceedings of Government, upon the precedent of proclamations issued in 1780; and which he has said had been then approved by the then leader of Opposition. The then leader of Opposition was Lord Rockingham. I did not much like that he or any of his friends should be quoted on the occasion, though I do not mean directly to condemn what has been done in Ulster, as I cannot speak to the necessity of it; but if I recollect matters rightly, it has no other resemblance to what was done here in 80, except that

in both cases a military force has been employed. But the manner of their employment, and the powers given to commanders, to the best of my recollection are altogether different. As the proclamations then issued in England are referred to, I wish to have a copy of them, as early as possible. You can speak to some friend who may put you in the way of finding them. They may be in the Annual Register, or some other of the periodical works of the time. I myself took a very active part, but I do not like to speak upon memory to the tenour or purport of the proclamations; for tho' many of the Opposition who were then members of the Privy Council were summoned (at least towards the beginning of this business) I knew nothing of it personally, not being then a Privy Counsellor. Lord Rockingham attended but once. During the greater part of the disturbances, tho' there was a garrison in Lord Rockingham's house, he was ill and confined to his bed. I believe Mr. Lee, clerk assistant of the House of Commons, can better put you in the way of getting these proclamations than any other person.—I jog on here pretty much as usual. My last night was a very bad one. God bless you.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTER LXVI.

TO MR. BURKE.

(Secret.)

MY DEAR SIR, Admiralty Court, March 29th, 1797.

THE enclosed from Lord F. is on the same subject with the last, which I sent you yesterday. Between this and Monday, I shall look narrowly about me in the House, to see if I can find any fit man beside Lord M.; as Lord F. and myself agreed before, that the measure would come better to the judgement of the country, if it did not apparently come from one and the same quarter. Sheridan's motion on Friday may afford an opportunity of feeling my way a little by preluding to my greater design, if I shall find it expedient; or at least of learning by the general temper of the House, whether there be yet any spirit left in the Parliament. There has always been a cry, by no means unpromising, whenever the Ministers have, as incidentally they have, touched on the danger of French principles. I am satisfied, that Ministers alone are the real causes of the prostration of the public mind. But Friday will probably shew more. Sheridan's motion, you know, is to prevent any more money being advanced to the Emperor, even under the vote of credit actually passed for that very purpose by the House. This is in my opinion to propose a

breach of implied faith. For, in putting so much money in the discretion of Government as a loan to the Emperor, I feel that we did in effect assure the Emperor of our assistance to such an amount. The question, if Government does not run away from it, seems to me therefore to be strong in their favour. Pray let me have your opinion by Friday morning. If I have any fair opportunity, I intend to speak; but detained as I am till four o'clock in this court, and then unable to go away immediately to an important debate without some refreshment, I never get down till the first speakers, who take the general ground, have done; and before I can collect from what follows, the tenor of the whole, it grows late, and the House, harassed as it is by daily attendance, becomes impatient. This alone prevented my speaking on the late Irish question, for which I went prepared with my documents in my pocket.—In what a state is Ireland! If I get well through my first great business, I have a mind to move a specific address relative to the Irish Catholics, founding it on the words of Lord Westmoreland's speech from the throne in 1793, and arguing the dismission of the Castle-cabal merely as a collateral point necessarily arising out of the conduct, which they before held, and which they have pledged themselves for ever to hold against the claims of their fellow-subjects of the Roman communion. At Woodford's the other day I accidentally met Sir Walter

James, brother-in-law of Lord Camden. Woodford was alarmed at first at my coming, which he did not expect, and prohibited politics. Sir Walter, however, began, and I did not actually avoid the subject; when to the surprise of our good host, we agreed very well on many points. The distinction made by the Irish between the personal character of the Viceroy, and the character of his government, Sir W. fully admitted on Lord Camden's own authority. He also concurred with me about the Catholics, as I put the case, and thought, that if the Chancellor had so pledged himself against them, his continuance in power ought not to stand in the way of the peace of the kingdom. This appears to me the best mode of putting the dismission of the Irish cabal to the minds of our Ministers here, who are thus in truth made parties against the cabal, and find it difficult to answer in their defence.

I do not know whether I have yet ever told you the continental news. In August last, when the French were in the heart of Germany, the King of Prussia made a convention agreeing to guarantee what is called Belgium, and Holland on the left bank of the Rhine. He has lately expressed his approbation of our terms offered through Lord Malmesbury. Both these very different acts of his were made known about the same time to the Emperor of Russia, who observed, that he would not say of his brother of Prussia, what in a similar

case he should say of a private person, "*C'est* "*infame.*" The French, you know, are very uneasy about the Prussian movements; which looks so far well, as at least his plans cannot be concerted with them in consequence of his convention.

I am, my dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Saturday, April 1st, 1797.

MY copyist disappointed me, and I could not send you the two sets of Resolutions. They will come by the coach which sets out from the Bolt-and-Tun Fleet-street, and puts up at the Castle and Ball, near St. Michael's Church, in Bath; and they will be at your house, probably as soon as this letter. In the same parcel you will find all the proclamations of June 1780 copied from the Remembrancer; they were not in either of the Annual Registers, new or old. I have also taken the opportunity of enclosing a bond which Troward sent me some little time since. He said that he drew it up by your directions. I desired Woodford to mention it to you; and had Troward sent

it in time, he would have brought it on his late visit to you.

Mr. Pitt spoke out stoutly last night about the importance of sending money to the Emperor. John King told me last night that Ministers seem to be in spirits; he does not know about what, but I suppose the elections in France, to which they have been long looking, and which are said to be going on in a manner, which they call, good: I am, in great haste,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 3d April, [1797.]

I RECEIVED your pacquets by the evening coach. The first paper of *Resolutions* is undoubtedly the most full and satisfactory. The latter I fear is alone practicable, and what is deficient in it, may be supplied in the opening or in debate. I think both of them skilfully and ably drawn. I have no serious objection to the wording in any part. If I could wish any thing changed it would be in the ninth resolution, where instead of the words "This "House has not yet received," perhaps it might

be better to say, "That this House, on combining "all the aforesaid circumstances, together with "the proceedings of the French in Italy, has found "by experience that His Majesty's and the public's "hopes have been disappointed, and that this "House," &c. &c.—In resolution 12, page 19, to omit the words "not despairing of the public weal, but."—Resolution 11, instead of the word "pleasure [satisfaction.]" I am not very confident that the alteration which I have suggested is for the better, on considering the matter fully; I must leave it to your discretion. I see the perilous position in which you stand, and could almost wish you never had engaged, (indeed I don't see how you can go on) without a living soul to second you—A *second* you must secure at any rate or you must drop the business entirely, and find, or make an opportunity on Mr. Sheridan's motion of delivering your sentiments upon our general policy, with regard to the Regicides and our alliance with regard to the Emperor.

I thank you for the Proclamations—they turn out very much as I expected. They have no resemblance to the proceedings in Ireland, but they are perfectly legal. There is no proclamation at all on the part of any general officer. Lord Amherst's orders of the 7th of June are only orders to the military to act without a magistrate, in using force for dispersing the illegal and tumultuous assemblies of the people. On the legality of this

order, which is however no proclamation of martial law, there was a great doubt and there is still upon my mind, of the legality; but afterwards Lord Mansfield and the Judges of the King's Bench declared it to be law "That in all cases wherein "by law every man is made a Constable for the "preservation of the publick peace, the military "do not lose the civil character, nor the duty and "obligation of acting as other men ought to act in "like cases." Admitting this doctrine to be true, and to this hour, I am sorry for it, it stands uncontradicted, there does not exist a *scintilla* of illegality, though in a time of such necessity much illegality might have been excused in the whole transaction. General Amherst's orders purport that they were issued under an order of the King's Council. The words "King's Council" are equivocal, and may signify the King's learned Counsel: because the usual style of an order in council is by His Majesty in Council. Can Mr. Faukener procure for you a copy of that order? at least he can know, whether Lord Rockingham, the only Privy Counsellor then in *our* Opposition that attended any Privy Council—and that was on the 4th or 5th of June. All the time after he was extremely ill, and for some days kept his bed.—I send you executed the bond to Mr. Wallis, and you will be so good as to take care, that the bond to Garrick for which this is exchanged should be delivered up and cancelled. I have heard nothing

about the suit against Owen, nor why it is suspended; for if we do not proceed in it, all my former expence in it is absolutely thrown away.

God Almighty bless and direct you. The boyish spirit of Ministers makes one laugh in vexation. They are in war, and their whole trust is in the enemy, who, whilst they are thinking of the elections, are menacing them with an invasion.

Yours ever,

E. B.

The bond is in a separate cover.

LETTER LXIX.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, April 3d, 1797.

I informed you that the coach by which I sent the parcel put up at the Castle and Ball. My servant has just been to the Bolt-and-Tun, in Fleet-street; and learns that the parcel was regularly sent on Saturday, and the coach should have reached Bath by *ten* yesterday morning. If you have not received it, had not Webster better enquire for it. It was done up in coarse brown paper; and directed to you, No. 11, North Parade, Bath.

The political part of the question on Sheridan's motion to-morrow is of the greatest magnitude and scope, from the advices of to-day, that the

plan of secularizing the Ecclesiastical States is avowed by Prussia, and notified to the Diet by the Emperor, who has declared his resolution of supporting the constitution and liberties of the empire; and it is said that the Emperor of Russia is determined to support him. I should like to speak, but I shall have a long and heavy cause all the morning in the Court of Admiralty. I shall go down fatigued, and without having had a single moment to call my scattered thoughts about [me] on so very important a subject. Of malice prepense I shall not venture, but circumstances will guide, and I shall take whatever little preparation I can. I scrawl in great haste.

Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,
FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, April 10th, 1797.

I AM exceedingly delighted with the very good accounts of you to-day and Saturday, especially after your little relapse. You know, that I some time since told you, that from watching your health for some months past I expected occasional recurrences of symptoms more or less bad; but if after every access, you get so much better again,

I shall be fully satisfied, trusting as I firmly do, in the natural strength and vigour of your vital powers. Between this and May I hope to have the pleasure of slipping down to you, though but for two or three days.

This morning I have been looking over my papers. Mr. Pollen's motion for peace comes on to-day. Windham however told me last night, that he believed the purpose was to let it pass with very little debate, and wished me not to press forward, but be guided by circumstances. I do not understand this policy, which I think no less blind than disreputable—to think of stealing on in a war to no one end but exhausting the finances of the country without an effort. I believe we might ultimately succeed in the battle of the purse, but the people of this country will not bear the burthen of a contest of the desk, the rule, and the multiplication table, without a single principle to animate them.

On Mr. Ellis's late motion, Windham paid your name some very just and handsome compliments, very honourable both to the subject and the panegyrist. The planters will not take the essential part of your regulations in the colonies; the connection of the slave with the soil; his consequent right to the spot, once assigned him, around his hut; and his right to purchase his freedom at a certain fixed price, with the fruits of his own industry. Their pretences are weak,

as I heard them privately discussed; but that last point, which is most important for the gradual abolition of slavery as well as the slave trade, will I trust hereafter follow.

The enclosed letter is from a gentleman who some time since wished me to put a paper into your hands. This I declined to do; but expressed my readiness to receive it myself. I read it, and was so well pleased with him, that I desired to have a copy, voluntarily offering to send it to you. It is a minute entered in Council at Madras, in favour of some Ryots, whom for a job some persons there wanted to dispossess. Mr. Huddlestone, who had protected the rights of the inhabitants before, at the Revenue Board, now was victoriously in the Council asserting their rights: but afterwards, when he was confined by illness, the job was brought forward in a still more enormous shape, and Petrie carried it. Mr. Huddlestone is a candidate for the Direction; I strongly commended his principles in my letter to him, but told him they would exclude him from the House-list. You will see his answer.

He has printed a number of testimonials of his services. They are very honourable to him. That which most pleased me was one in a private letter from Mr. *Swartz*, whose name and character you well know, at Tanjore, where Mr. H. was resident almost two years. Mr. Swartz represents him as highly pleasing and useful to the Rajah, bene-

ficial to the Company, a protector and mediator for the inhabitants, whom oppression had driven to despair and emigration; and in his own conduct upright and disinterested. This too was a private letter from Mr. Swartz to a friend in England, not a public certificate to Mr. Huddlestone.

Mr. H. is a near relation of Dr. Harington at Bath, and I was very intimate with his brother at Oxford. I write in great haste; and am,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I have the bond safe. I told Mr. Troward that I would deliver it to him, whenever he would send the former bond to Garrick. He has not yet sent it: when he does, I will let you know.

LETTER LXXI.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

Bath, 11th April 1797,
5 o'clock

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I AM glad to have heard from you at last. This terrible war on the continent has come to a crisis. Whether our pacific War is come to *its* terrible crisis, is a matter of great doubt; but unless God interposes in some signal way, it must terminate in a peace which, like Scylla, has a thousand

barking monsters of a thousand wars in its womb! God preserve us from such peace and such wars. As for himself, Windham is perfectly in the right to be governed by circumstances; but as for you, who act with no party and are in no office, your own honour and your personal reputation are the sole circumstances by which you are to be guided. —Therefore profit of the first opening. If the Emperor's defection is solely owing to the bad state of his own affairs, than which nothing I admit can appear worse, we have much to lament and nothing to blame; but if the spirit of the debates in the English Parliament have tended to bring on despair, or if our want of a supply to his necessities has crippled his armaments, then we have at once to lament and to blame. However, there is the hand of God in this business, and there is an end of the system of Europe, taking in laws, manners, religion and politics, in which I delighted so much. My poor Son was called off in time—"ne quid "tale videret."

I understand that Ellis spoke handsomely of me, for which I thank him; and do you so too, through yourself or any medium you can find. As to Windham he never fails, but of this there is not a word; by our paper I should have thought he had not spoken: but it is no matter—all our plans are defeated by the settlement which the peace will make of the French system in the West Indies. Mr. Huddlestone's letter is very obliging,

but I really wish him to keep all his sentiments concealed until he can get into the direction. Tell him that this is my opinion, and that then perhaps he may steal some little good; for we, who had for fourteen years struggled to do more, have been miserably defeated, if not with our own, yet with the national disgrace.

I wrote to Mr. Troward, and wonder you have not seen him. You had better call on him, as he lies directly in your way. Pray let me hear from you as often as you can, though it were but by a line. Your coming hither must be very inconvenient to you, and where is the use of your seeing me in the body of this death. In truth, I suffer very little pain, but I gain no strength at all. If I find any difference it is that my little strength declines. Adieu. God bless you.

Yours ever,

E. B.

Mrs. Burke is a trifle better of her cold—and Webster, who has been dangerously ill, is also better.

LETTER LXXII.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, London, April 25th, 1797.

I HAVE seen the Speaker again, and had a long conference with him. He thinks that some of my conclusions of course could not be supported at this moment, during the pendency of Mr. Hammond's mission. The fate of his negociation will probably turn upon events. There is a violent faction in Vienna for peace; more so than in this country. This has compelled the Emperor to allow a negociation. But Baron Thugut, his principal adviser, is still firm. The Archduke attacked, though unsuccessfully, the rear of Bonaparte's army; and since has agreed to an armistice of five days. On the other side, Bonaparte's left wing in the Tyrol has been completely beaten; Brixen and Botzen retaken; and Trent is expected to follow. Kerpen and Laudohn hope to clear that country; in which case they will be in Bonaparte's rear. His friends here begin already to entertain apprehensions for his safety. Troops are hastening from the Rhine to the Austrian armies, and 20,000 are said already to be in the vicinity of Saltzburgh on Bonaparte's left flank. The Emperor is gone to raise and head the Hungarians. There is yet a faint glimmering of light.

The mutiny has subsided. Admiral Sir Alan Gardiner acted with spirit; and there is therefore in the lovers of shabbiness a disposition to say that he went rather too far. The petition to Parliament will not be presented. I was in hopes that it would have been rejected.

Troward has just been with me to exchange the bonds. I have cancelled the former, which I enclose. Believe me,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and devotedly yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, April 28th, 1797.

ENCLOSED is a letter from France, from the Count de Châtillon. It is without an address, but I believe it to be intended for you. He tells me in his letter to me that he has sent one, which he desires me to forward to you; but he says also, that he has written by the same opportunity to Mr. O'Hara, who has, however, not received his letter. Should the enclosed, contrary to what I suppose, be intended for Mr. O'Hara, I will trouble you to return it to me.

The Count charges me to assure you most faithfully, that what he has said to you is very much below what he feels towards you. On public affairs his account is by no means favourable. His words are, " Je n'ai pas trouvé en arrivant les " choses aussi couleur de rose qu'on les débitait " tandis que j'etais avec vous. Un évênement " que s'est venu a votre connaissance (I believe he means the discovery of the Royalists at Paris) " a tout changé. Le delire se propage de nouveaux, ainsi que l'inquisition la plus vigilante. " Vous sentez d'après cela les grandes mesures " qu'il faut observer." His letter however is dated so far back as the first of March; since which time the Royalists have a little rallied again. One of the prisoners under prosecution, has been actually chosen a deputy to one of the councils, and chosen unanimously by his electors.

Yesterday I saw Woodford, and requested him to get you through Windham a copy of the second Report of the Finance Committee, and another of the third Report of the Secret Committee on the causes of the Stoppage of the Bank. The latter has some important information. I will not attempt to point it all out in detail to you. Indeed almost every part is curious and interesting in some way or other. The opinion of Mr. Irving the Inspector General *(calculating with all possible caution)* with regard to the balance of our trade, is particularly consolatory; and if he is accurate in what

he says of the East India and West India trades, he must be, I think, certainly under the mark as to the whole balance. Yet even according to his computation, the actual profit of our trade is not very short of all the expences of the war abroad in all parts of the world, as they appear in a paper in the appendix, which exhibits a sum total of thirty-two millions, up to the 12*th of April* 1797; and above four millions are for naval stores, which may probably form a part actually allowed, as imports, in Mr. Irving's account. The table of imports and exports for twenty years past will cut up in half a dozen different ways. Since the year 1790 our exports have encreased one third of their whole present amount; and more by two millions than they encreased in the ten years preceding. The export of British manufactures in the same period has encreased in value by a sum equal to one half of their whole value at the close of the American war. That export last year was one million more than in the year 1792, when we were at peace and half Europe at war, while the export of foreign merchandize on a comparison of the same two years is nearly doubled. Looking back to the American war again, our export of British manufactures has more than doubled itself, and our whole export trade considerably more. The view is still improved, if you turn to the imports, which have not encreased in proportion; and the great encrease there is in the East and probably in the West

India trade, neither of them to be put on the side of loss. Taking Mr. Irving's explanation relative to these two branches of trade, and the Newfoundland fishery (circumstances which since your observations on the state of the nation all writers on political œconomy have learned to distinguish) I cannot but be of opinion that the whole balance must be greater than Mr. Irving makes it, if you only cast your eye on the table of imports and exports, with every possible fair allowance for articles among the exports intended for the uses of the war, and for second cargoes sent to replace what may have been captured by the enemy.

I do not know whether I told you what the Speaker informed me;—that Mr. Pitt the other day at dinner repeated with much commendation some parts of my speech on Mr. Harrison's motion. I should not have mentioned this to you, had not you been the principal subject of that speech. Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Wednesday noon. [April 1797.]

I HAVE just agreed with Sir William Scott (whose Lady is at Bath) to put myself into a mail coach with him on Saturday night, and to return hither again on Thursday morning by the same conveyance.

With your unpleasant reflexions on public affairs I perfectly accord. It was not possible, or I should have certainly spoken on Monday. I could not get down till Mr. Pollen's and Mr. Pitt's first speeches were over; nor did I know a syllable of Mr. Hammond's mission but from the information stuck up at the window of a newspaper office, and conceived in the most vague and general terms, which I read on my way to the House. What I could learn by enquiry about Mr. Pitt's declaration, was very little and uncertain. I waited therefore till I could collect it better in the course of the debate. The House from the first moment of my entrance was very impatient, and called for the question at the end of every speech; and Sir John Macpherson about eight o'clock pushed that impatience to a climax. He was almost incessantly laughed at, coughed at, and shouted at, yet he persevered in the most gentle and conciliatory manner, though in vain,

for more than half an hour. He uttered two or three follies in the two or three first sentences, and the House, which was very full, could not, afterwards get their risible muscles into any order, notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts of the Speaker.

The Speaker's brother made not a bad speech (at least the latter part of it, which alone I heard) on very good principles. Sir William Pulteney was very stout and sound respecting the Netherlands and Holland; and for a monied man, spoke with a due contempt of the value of money in competition with such objects. He asked what signified so many more or so many less guineas in the pocket, if none could be enjoyed with security. If the Emperor had experienced disasters, that was the time to say to him, "Here, take so much "the more money, and exert yourself so much the "more to repair your disasters." A Mr. Johnes spoke also some few sentences very well and very stoutly. The House gave indications of liking these things, if Ministers had not stummed the cask beforehand.

I shall endeavour, before I see you, to renew an old and very long-interrupted acquaintance with Sir William Pulteney; I have had my eye upon him, and so has Lord Fitzwilliam too, for my seconder, but I wished first to see more of his opinions, because I had heard his conduct on the vote of credit attributed (but I am now satisfied

unjustly) to resentment for the refusal of some job or other. Thus is character whispered away on one side. On the other, I myself last Monday night in the House overheard a Jacobin (who he was I could not positively ascertain) in one of those running comments, which many men perpetually make to their neighbours, prophesy the guillotine, or menace it, I did not distinctly hear which, to Sir William Pulteney for his speech of that night. I am the more resolved to utter my opinions on the loan to the Emperor next Friday se'nnight, and perhaps work some allusion to what I overheard into an exordium, as I think it may be made impressive.

Your intelligence about Mrs. Burke, and poor Webster too, gives me great satisfaction. About yourself it is not bad on the whole. God ever bless you and all yours! Believe me ever to be,

My dear Sir,
Most gratefully and
affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I will thank Nagle, if he will carry the enclosed draft for acceptance or payment, and *let me know by the return of the post*, as it will make a difference in the *viaticum* which I may bring to Bath.—To-morrow I will call on, or send to, Troward.

LETTER LXXV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, April 29th, 1797.

WOODFORD, I find, sent you the authentick intelligence of yesterday, except that it was a mistake to state the French to have been under General Massena; they were a separate force under General Joubert acting in the Tyrol. Buonaparte's situation is certainly very critical; and among other reinforcements of the Arch-Duke, General Mack is on his march from the Rhine with twenty squadrons. In the meantime the successes of the Austrians in the Tyrol will enable them to push forward towards Italy, and intercept all Buonaparte's supplies of every kind, and the troops which might be sent to strengthen him.

I write this from the House: A message from the King has just been delivered, recommending a loan of a million and a half to Ireland; and one of three millions and six hundred thousand pounds to the Emperor; to pay one million six hundred thousand already advanced by government here, and two millions to be sent as government here shall think best, for the support of his exertions in the common cause, till we can obtain *a secure and adequate* peace. Very flat and tame! But I will not lose every hope. Things seem to be taking a turn in Germany, which may once more

give us a little common spirit and common sense. God bless you and all yours. Ever, my dear Sir,

Most gratefully and
affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, London, May 8th, 1797.

THE general good account of your health (I mean especially, that the returns of your complaint are less and less violent and obstinate, and your strength more and more encreased in the intervals) is the best intelligence which I have received for some time. Why we are taken away and why we are spared, we know not; the dispensations of Providence are inscrutable; but while you are suffered to remain, I shall always cherish a hope, even beyond my general confidence, that the moral, and in that the political, order of the world, can never be intended by the great Creator and Disposer of all, to be abandoned to final destruction.

There is something a little, and but a very little, consoling in the last accounts from the continent. What are the exact preliminaries between the Emperor and France is not known accurately here. Ministers have not been acquainted with

them. But a state paper from another quarter makes the congress probable and something of more efficiency. The Directory applied in March to the King of Prussia to mediate a peace, including England; and this he has notified at Ratisbon. We have also been told before that he approved Lord Malmesbury's offers; and it is said, that now he does not mean that the Rhine shall be the French boundary, but the Meuse.

You know my opinions. They remain the same. They are even strengthened in one point, as to the distress of the common enemy; since the French have abandoned their high pretensions of suffering no mediation, asserted in their answer to the Danish Minister on our first application for Lord Malmesbury's passport, have allowed a congress which they before refused on our original proposition, and by both these acts in the midst of their successes have evinced some little disposition to moderation, which in them can only be the effect of necessity. On our side, bullion has been literally pouring into the country, and I think some new indications of the prosperity of the country have lately come out. The number of enclosure bills passed last year was greater than ever was known, and more than double the average of the period from the American peace up to the last year. I should therefore be stouter than ever were it not for the internal state of the British Empire. Ministers will not open their eyes with regard to

Ireland; and they have lost the time of gaining the Catholics in my estimation, while in the meantime the opposition party in that country have gone farther than sober men can approve and in all respects support, as they would wish. They have entangled themselves inextricably, I fear with what is called Parliamentary Reform. I have every serious alarm for Ireland, if the Foreign war should continue. What must be the primary defence of that country? Our navy, to prevent a junction between the French and Irish Jacobin armies. And what is the state of our navy? I some time since intimated my apprehensions of the consequences which might arise from the weak and undignified manner in which Government gave way to a just claim of the seamen, improperly, illegally, and dangerously asserted. It is said today, that a fresh mutiny has broken out, in which blood has been shed,—I believe, on both sides. With a mutinous navy and a rebellion in Ireland (which I think will certainly be if the war continues and Ministers remain obstinate as to Ireland) it would require very different abilities for the conduct of war from those which have been manifested by the present Government, to make me expect any benefit from *suffering war* under them rather than treat in a congress. The armistice of four months (in which it is said we may be included if we please) may give time for our credit to recover itself, as it is now in fact very nearly

recovered, and for suppressing the first possible movements in the North of Ireland. The congress in which I presume the Emperor of Russia *as our ally* may take part, may produce some impression unfavourable to the French, both in the mind of Paul the First as well as of Frederic William, who I have reason to think, now that he has weakened the House of Austria by his neutrality, begins to be uneasy at his new neighbours and friends. Neither am I wholly without hopes from some late publications *of the official style* in the Morning Chronicle, and what I have privately heard and observed, that Fox may take the opportunity of putting himself on something more like constitutional grounds against French ambition. The true cure of our internal evils, I conceive, would be the attachment, the warm and zealous attachment, of the Irish Catholics, and a vigorous and united attack with our whole force on those parts of the French coast, where we might yet best expect to reanimate the Royal cause. But this is too great for the present Ministers, who are little. I shall take some occasion to express these sentiments; but I shall less commit myself with such a Government and for such a Government. Lord F. will be in town this week, I shall talk to him seriously about it.

I am obliged to conclude in haste. What I have written was scrawled, till I had no more paper in the Admiralty. I am going to a call of the House

Remember me to Mrs. Burke. God bless you and her, and all yours! Believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully and affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, May 11th, 1797.

HAPPILY I escaped the disgrace of last Monday. Did you ever witness such a scene; as abject a surrender to our own mutineers, as to the Jacobins of France! And then, what childish weakness to think that we can deceive ourselves as well as our enemies, by shutting up our own mouths and eyes!

I was going down, when I found that the House was up. Last night a vote of censure was moved against Ministers, for not having been sufficiently precipitate in their surrender. Indeed upon their own principle, of carefully avoiding any thing dignified in doing an act of justice, accompanied with a censure on the manner in which the claim had been asserted, I do not well see why Ministers did not sooner bring forward the subject, and make the earliest submission. I arrived about seven o'clock, having been speaking for

two hours in a heavy cause in the Court of Arches. After a single short speech from Lord G. Cavendish, from whom I could collect nothing as to the general situation of the debate, there was a cry of question, and the House divided. I wished to have spoken, but it was actually impossible. Indeed of late, as affairs grow more serious, there seems to be an encreased impatience of lengthened debate, and Ministers have no other feeling but that of delight at getting rid of every question so quietly. These are some of the worst symptoms in the present general breaking up of every authority. We run away from that situation which we have not courage to face.

Windham is getting right about Ireland. I had a short conversation with him last night on the subject. He is for treating with Grattan and the Ponsonbys, and not only giving up the Catholic question, but even allowing (what he does not himself like more than you and me) some change in the constitution of Parliament. I told him what had been Ponsonby's specifick motion on that subject, and he said he was glad to have known it, as it was so little objectionable in comparison of every other.

He wishes to have your opinion; but he is a little afraid to ask it, from his former difference on that point. You may write to me as if I had asked it for myself, and I will communicate it to him, as I think it may be of real use at this

moment. His system in one word, is to go with an army in one hand and conciliation in the other.—*Bella manu pacemque gerens.*

The Report of the Lords' Secret Committee is just come out. It is more ably done by much than our Report. If possible, I will get and send you a copy. I dipped into Mr. Irving's evidence, and he explains himself on a question there asked him, that he calculates the commercial balance at six millions five hundred thousand pounds, *independently of the remittances of the fortunes of individuals from the East and West Indies*, which he estimates at *four millions more.*

There have been very opposite advices from Portsmouth in the course of the night: but the last, thank God, is favourable. Adair received an express from his son, telling him that the delegates had resisted the wishes of the people of the London to send Colpoys and his Captain ashore, and were determined to proceed against them with all severity; adding the strongest expressions of apprehension for their safety, if there was not some immediate and decisive interference of Government or Parliament. He went instantly in the middle of the night to Lord Spenser, and with him to Mr. Pitt. He was on his road to Portsmouth with the result of their consultation, when he met a second express from his son, informing him that things had taken a better turn, and he believed the Admiral and Captain to be safe.

The most mutinous of the crews had returned to their duty. The ministerial mercury, I suppose, will be to-day up at *settled fair*. God bless you and my late correspondent Mrs. Burke! I am,

My dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully

and affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXXVIII.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 12th May, 1797.

THE times are so deplorable, that I do not know how to write about them. Indeed I can hardly bear to think of them. In the selection of these mischiefs, those, which have the most recently oppressed, and overpowered, rather than exercised, the shattered remains of my understanding, are those of the Navy, and those of Ireland. As to the first, I shall say nothing, except this, that you must remember from the moment the true genius of this French revolution began to dawn upon my mind, I comprehended what it would be in its meridian; and that I have often said, that I should dread more from one or two maritime provinces in France, in which the spirit and principles of that revolution were established, than from the old French Monarchy possessed of all that its ambition

ever aspired to obtain; that we should begin to be infected in the first Nidus and hot-bed of their infection, the subordinate parts of our military force, and that I should not be surprised at seeing a French convoyed by a British Navy to an attack upon this kingdom. I think you must remember the thing, and the phrase. I trust in God that these mutineers may not as yet have imbrued their hands deeply in blood. If they have, we must expect the worst that can happen. Alas! for the mischiefs that are done by the newspapers, and by the imbecility of the Ministers, who neither refuse or modify any concession, nor execute with promptitude the resolutions they take through fear; but are hesitating and backward, even in their measures of retreat and flight: in truth they know nothing of the manœuvre either in advance or retreat.

The other affair, hardly less perplexing, nor much less instantly urging, is that of Ireland.

Mr. B. was here, and he spoke something, though indistinctly and confusedly, of a strong desire that he supposed the **** to have for a reconciliation with ****. Whether this is mere loose talk, such as I have uniformly heard from the day of the fatal rupture, is more than I know. My answer was, that while the cause of this calamitous rupture was yet in its operation, I had done every thing which a man like me could do, to prevent it, and its effects, but that now the question was not what should reconcile the ****

to ****, but what would reconcile Ireland to England! This was very near the whole of our conversation. You know he does not see very far, nor combine very much. I have had a hint from another quarter, not indeed very direct, to know whether it was my opinion that a concession to the Irish Catholics, would quiet that country. To this I have given no answer, because at this moment I am utterly incapable of giving any, the least distinct! Three months ago, perhaps even two months ago, I can say with confidence, notwithstanding the hand from which it would be offered, it would have prevented the discontents from running into one mass; even if the compliance had been decently evaded, and future hopes held out, I think these mischiefs would not have happened; but instead of this, every measure has been used that could possibly tend to irritation. The rejection of the Memorial, was abrupt, final, and without any temperament whatsoever. The speeches in the House of Lords in Ireland were in the same strain; and in the House of Commons, the Ministers put forward a wretched brawler, one Duigenan of your profession, to attack Mr. Fox, though they knew, that as a British Member of Parliament, he was by them invulnerable; but their great object was, to get him to rail at the whole body of Catholics and Dissenters in Ireland in the most foul and unmeasured language. This brought on, as they might well have expected from Mr. Grattan,

one of the most animated philippics which he ever yet delivered, against their Government and Parliament.

It was a speech the best calculated that could be conceived further to inflame the irritation which the Castle-brawler's long harangue must necessarily have produced. As to Mr. Fox, he had all the honour of the day, because the invective against him was stupid, and from a man of no authority or weight whatsoever; and the panegyrick which was opposed to it, was full of eloquence, and from a great name. The Attorney General in wishing the motion withdrawn, as I understand, did by no means discountenance the principle upon which it was made, nor disown the attack, which was made in a manner, upon the whole people of Ireland. The Solicitor General went the full length of supporting it. Instead of endeavouring to widen the narrow bottom upon which they stand, they make it their policy to render it every day more narrow. In the Parliament of Great Britain, Lord Grenville's speech turned the loyalty of the Catholics against themselves. He argued from that zeal and loyalty they manifested, their want of a sense of any grievance. This speech, though probably well intended, was the most indiscreet and mischievous of the whole. People do not like to be put into practical dilemmas. If the people are turbulent and riotous, nothing is to be done for them on account of their

evil dispositions. If they are obedient and loyal, nothing is to be done for them, because their being quiet and contented is a proof that they feel no grievance. I know that this declaration has had its natural effect, and that in several places the Catholics think themselves called upon to deny the inference made by Ministers from their good conduct. It seems to them a great insult to convert their resolution to support the King's government into an approbation of the conduct of those who make it the foundation of their credit and authority that they are the enemies of their description.

I send you two extracts of letters, for * * * * and your information, from intelligent and well informed people in Cork;* and one of them from a gentleman of much consideration and influence

* *Extract of a Letter from Cork; dated May 3d, 1797.*

--- "As to the affairs of this country, I neither know what to say or think of them; but this I am sorry to be able to assure you of, that there is a very great and general change in the minds of the people here, brought about within a short period. No more of that enthusiasm of loyalty and detestation of French principles, which prevailed so much on the late alarms. It is now "*The English Minister and Govern-*" *ment detest poor Ireland, and would set us to cutting one ano-*" *ther's throats, as they have done in the North,*" *&c. &c.* In short, such is the language spoken by every man almost you meet, and a great deal worse. Government's ingratitude, in an absolute refusal of any further boon to the Catholics, has roused the resentment of the quietest spirits; and the severe punishments inflicted in some places on the militia, for going

in that place. These will let you see the effect of that conduct which tends to unite all descriptions to mass, instead of the Protestant church, is surely, not to give it a worse appellation, impolitic in the extreme."

Extract of a Letter from Cork; dated May 4th, 1797.

"By the Dublin papers you will see what is going on there. We can expect no remedy from a wretched junto, who are involving their country in certain ruin. A letter from a man in government (whom I cannot mention) to his friend here, laments the infatuation of what he calls the *interior cabinet*, to which he of the *exterior* has no access. The great turnings out there give us some hopes of their filling up the measure of their iniquities before it is too late to save us. That *interior* cabinet must have choaked up every channel of communication to the King, or we never could be abandoned to the situation we are now in. The swearing has reached to Carberry; and it is said to have got into Blackpool, which is known to be the most Protestant suburb of this city. Roger O'Connor was obliged to fly for his apostleship, and his steward would have been probably convicted at the assizes, had he not put off his trial. The minds of men are much changed since Christmas. The golden opportunity was lost to Government, of assuming the whole merit of granting, what is certainly but a small boon.

It must come in spite of ascendancy, with many other reforms through every department, otherwise the foundation will be undermined. The tythe folks are hard at work to encrease them, and as overbearing as ever. It is astonishing how the interest of the moment can blind them. But until some commutation takes place, the country never can be quiet.

Tythes will ever be one of the most powerful weapons a demagogue can wield. On the whole it appears to me that the minds of men are so heated, that nothing but the *horrors* of revolution can cool them. Many wish for the experiment, and to fly to ills they know not of."

of persons in the South, in the same spirit of discontent, and in the same bonds of sedition with those of the North. As far as I can find, no part of the army in Ireland is yet tainted with the general spirit; but under a general discontent it is impossible it should long continue sound; and even if it did, it is as impossible that such a country can be ruled by a military government, even if there were no enemy abroad to take advantage of that miserable state of things.

Now suffer me to throw down to you my thoughts of what might be expected under the existing circumstances, from the mere grant of an Act of Parliament for a total emancipation. This measure I hold to be a fundamental part in any plan for quieting that country and reconciling it to this; but you are well aware, that this measure, like every other measure of the kind, must depend on the manner in which it is done, the persons who do it, and the skill and judgement with which the whole is conducted. And first, my clear opinion is, that as long as the present junto continue to govern Ireland, such a measure into which they must manifestly appear to be reluctantly driven, never can produce the effects proposed by it, because it is impossible to persuade the people that as long as they govern, they will not have both the power and inclination totally to frustrate the effect of this new arrangement, as they have done that of all the former.

Indeed it will appear astonishing that these men should be kept in the sole monopoly of all power, upon the sole merit of their resistance to the Catholick claims, as inconsistent with the connexion of the two kingdoms; and yet at the same time to see those claims admitted, and the pretended principle of the connexion of the two countries abandoned, to preserve to the same persons the same monopoly. By this it would appear that the subject is either to be relieved or not; and the union of the two kingdoms abandoned, or maintained, just as it may answer the purposes of a faction of three or four individuals. But if that junto was thrown out to-morrow along with their measure, Government has proceeded in such a manner, and committed so many [things] in violent declarations on this subject, that a complete emancipation would no longer pass with its former facility, and a strong ferment would be excited in the church party, who though but few in numbers, have in their hands most of the ultimate and superior property of the kingdom. These difficulties appear to me to be great. Certain it is, that if they were removed, the leaders of the opposition must be taken into their places, and become the object of confidence to an English Government. They are to a man pledged for some alteration in the constitution of Parliament. If they made no such alteration, they would lose the weight which they have, and which is necessary

to quiet the country. If on the other hand they were to attempt a change upon any of the plans of moderation which I hear they have adopted, they would be as far from satisfying the demands of the extravagant people, whom they mean to comply with, as they would be in preserving the actual constitution which was fabricated in 1614. The second infallible consequence would be, that if a revolution of this kind (for it would be a revolution) were accomplished in Ireland, though the grounds are a little different yet the principle is so much the same, that it would be impossible long to resist an alteration of the same kind on this side of the water; and I never have doubted since I came to the years of discretion, nor ever can doubt, that such changes in this kingdom would be preliminary steps to our utter ruin; but if I considered them as such at all times, what must they appear to me at a moment like the present? I see no way of settling these kingdoms but by a great change in the superior Government *here*. If the present Administration is removed, it is manifest to me, that the Duke of Bedford, and Lord Guilford, and the Duke of Northumberland, and Lord Lansdowne, all, or most of them, under the direction of Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Fox, will be the sole option; that if they took in the Duke of Portland, they must take him in, at best, in the state of utter insignificance in which unfortunately he now stands. That they would gladly

take in my Lord Fitzwilliam I have no question; but, I am sure, he would have no support, and never would be suffered to play any principal part, as long as he holds the maxims, and is animated by the sentiments for which, as a statesman, we value him. He certainly would be best in Ireland, but I am very far from being sure that his connexions there would look up to him with the same simple and undivided affection which they formerly did; and I am equally uncertain whether he would leave behind him a ministry, which in the mass would be better disposed to his support, than those who had formerly betrayed him. Besides, I cannot look without horror, upon his being conjoined (and possibly found in a new reign in such a conjunction) with a Ministry who have spared no pains to prove their indifference at least, to the local honour and interest of their country, or to the general liberty of Europe. And indeed, who have wished to leave no doubt upon any mind, that it is their ambition to act in this country as a subordinate department to the Directory of the French Republick. I see no ray of hope but in some sort of coalition between the heads of the factions who now distract us, formed upon a sense of the publick danger. But unfortunately their animosity towards each other grows with the danger. I confess that if no such coalition is made, and yet that a change should take place, I see in the present Ministry and its parti-

sans an opposition far more formidable than that which we have at present; and that after a while at least, their principles and their modes of proceeding will not be found very different from those of the present Opposition. I must add, since I am opening my mind so much at large, that when I look at the state of the *civil* list in Great Britain, which I have reason to know and feel to be full two years in debt to most of the departments, I see no means of carrying on Government upon any thing like a broad bottom, even officially; to say nothing of the necessary accommodation to those expectants who will look to come forward with advantage, or to retire without marks of disgrace; and both parties have emulously concurred in cutting off all those extraneous means of accommodation, which might supply the deficiency of the civil list resources. In Ireland things are yet worse. They have seized upon all the means of Government, in order to accommodate one family, and its dependencies; and they have so squandered away every resource, under the pretence of providing a home defence, that not only is Ireland unable to form a system of comprehension, but England will soon find itself unable to supply that kingdom with the means of its ordinary existence. To whatever point of the compass I turn my eyes, I see nothing but difficulty and disaster. You will naturally say, Why therefore do you reason in a state of despair?

I do it, that * * * * and yourself may see my melancholy reveries in this deplorable state of things. The very consideration of the difficulties which strike me, may suggest to better heads than mine, the means of overcoming them.

I do not know whether you have seen Hussey's Pastoral Letter. It is written with eloquence and energy, and with perhaps too little management towards the unfortunate system which rules in Ireland at present; but it is the product of a manly mind, strongly impressed with the trust committed to his hands for supporting that religion, in the administration of which he has a very responsible place, and which he considers as in the commencement of a new persecution. It is therefore no wonder that he recommends an adherence to it under all circumstances, which many people animated by a contrary party zeal may not approve: but men must act according to their situation, and for one I am of opinion that it were better to have a strong party zeal, provided it is bottomed in our common principles, than any thing resembling infidelity, which last we know, by woful experience, is as capable of religious persecution as any Sectarian spirit can possibly be.

I received your letter of yesterday. Nothing can equal the precipitation of Ministers, in acceding to the demands of the first mutiny. Nothing but want of foresight can be alleged in favour of the formalizing delay to effectuate the purposes of the grant

which had been extorted from their fears. But this will ever be the case of those who act from no principle but fear. The moment that is over, they fall into a supine security. I agree with you, that no folly ever equalled their attempt to beg off discussion upon this subject. They ought to have known that it would have no other effect than what it had, which was to provoke and inflame the discussion they so childishly sought to avoid; but the whole is the result of that meanness of spirit which has brought on all our misfortunes, and rendered all our resources fruitless.

Delicacy alone has been the sole cause of my silence to Mr. Windham, with relation to the affairs of Ireland; otherwise he is entitled to, and he possesses my most unreserved confidence. I have therefore no sort of difficulty in wishing him to know my thoughts upon that subject. They will not be very encouraging to him, because I am greatly afraid that the preposterous method [of] beginning with force and ending with concession, may defeat the effect of both. If things had been in their natural course, I should certainly have agreed with him. No concession on the part of Government ought ever to be made without such a demonstration of force, as might ensure it against contempt. It will always be a matter of great moment in whose hands the force to be applied in domestick disturbances is placed. Never, no, never shall I be persuaded that any force can appear

otherwise than as odious, and more odious than dreaded, when it is known to be under the direction of * * * *. I will not enter into all the particulars, but among the many mischievous measures lately adopted, his nomination to the office of commander in chief led to by far the worst consequences.

When I am opening my mind to you, I must add, that as long as a shallow, hot-headed puppy, proud and presumptuous, and ill behaved, like * * * *, has the chief or any credit at the Castle, or with Ministry here, I can expect no sort of good from any thing that can be done in Parliament. When we talk of giving way to Mr. Grattan and the Ponsonbys, I suppose it is meant that they should be taken into the Irish Ministry; else to give them a triumph, and at the same time to leave them in a state of discontent and dissatisfaction, if we consider the interest of Government as Government, is to act against the most obvious dictates of common sense. Adieu. I may truly say with Addison's Cato, "I am weary of conjecture." I will not add with him, that "this must end them." But they must soon be ended by the Master of the drama, to whose will, pray with me, that we may be all, in all things, submissive.—Don't forget to send me the Report of the House of Commons, and that of the House of Lords, if you can get it; though I do not know why I am anxious about it, because as a nation

our fate seems decided, and we perish with all the material means of strength that ever nation has possessed, by a poverty and imbecility of mind which has no example I am sure, and could have no excuse even in the weakest. Adieu, adieu.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTER LXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 18th May. [1797.]

I SEND you the copy of the Memorial which you desire; which surely if any one thing rather than another could less deserve the proud and disdainful reception and negative which it met with, it must be that paper. I believe you will coincide with me in opinion. I think you read it to Mr. Windham, and that he saw nothing objectionable in it; but, on the contrary, a degree of moderation much to be commended.—A letter from Dr. W. King gives me to expect to see Lord Fitzwilliam here in this week or the beginning of next. If he should not then come, I wish he would not trouble himself in coming at all; as, in my own opinion, and that of my physician, I am to expect no further good from the waters here; and he more than doubts, whether his permitting me to use them upon the credit of the benefit

I derived from [them] last year, has had the support of experience. The fact is, I am just where I was when you left me; and if there be any difference, it is, that I find myself weaker, and more emaciated. So, that my purpose is, to point my view homeward, and to proceed on my journey only as my strength shall give me leave; and as I think to proceed only as by airings, to take the way by the Vale of Rodborough, Cheltenham, and Oxford. But on this point I am not determined. As to my general regimen, and course of physick, if it pleases God to continue me a little longer here, I can observe [them] at home; and if I should die, I should certainly die with something more [of] satisfaction there. All this you will communicate in substance to Lord Fitzwilliam. I shall certainly not set off until Wednesday or Thursday next; and it is likely that I shall be four days, at least, in going home.

What I have now to say, you cannot directly communicate either to Windham or to ****. I am astonished to find **** approving as he does, in a short letter to me, my ideas upon the subject of a coalition, and yet proposing a plan in direct opposition to it — namely, the total turning out of this Ministry, and substituting in its place all the leaders of Opposition. I consider what he says of Mr. Windham and the D. of Portland as no exceptions, because they would be as insignificant in such an arrangement as they are in the present; and after all the foul,

motives assigned by that Opposition, publickly, for the part they have taken, between you and I, I do not see how, as men of honour, they can arrange with it; particularly the Duke of Portland, who is not in the habit of explaining and defending his conduct—and therefore is wholly at the mercy of others in every step of life that he takes. I am bitterly sorry for it, but he has had his day and he is no more. As to ****, I believe they would be very glad to take him in; but upon whose support is he to depend? whether he is to stay in cabinet here, or to trust himself to the tempestuous sea of Ireland, as Lord Lieutenant; because for him to advise a system of administration in which he has no part, is so unwise a proceeding, that, most assuredly, for one, I shall never recommend it. Indeed I shall never recommend the Jacobin Ministry he proposes; with principles unretracted, and with propensities unchanged—without either direction or controul. I am astonished at ****'s impudence in speaking to him at all; but much more of his speaking in favour of that low, intriguing, and perfidious tool ****, whose sole recommendation to the great office he holds, and which is much above his merits, was his betraying ****. At ****'s impudence I am not surprised. If I should have the happiness of seeing **** when he has himself communicated to me his own ideas, I shall give my opinion upon them fully and freely.

What is the reason that among the removals they say nothing of ****, who is a more mischievous person even than the Chancellor. Why talk of ****, when Yelverton was upon all accounts the fairest pretension upon a change conducted on ****'s ideas. But I shall not just now trouble you any more upon this part of the subject. I shall certainly never desire Windham to resign, for the destroying this Administration, without seeing distinctly what other can be made. It would be highly dishonourable for him to quit Administration, merely because it is in difficulties, for the direct purpose of bringing in their enemies. The publick is gone irrecoverably, and there is nothing left to individuals but to fall with decorum.—Mrs. Burke is tolerable, and yours as usual. Adieu.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTER LXXX.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, May 18th, 1797.

YOUR letter too just, though so melancholy, I have read both to Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Windham. I have given a copy to the former, and promised one to the latter.

T ****, I must inform you in confidence, seems to be more pleased with your opinion that some *coalition* is the only chance of safety, than deterred by the horror which you express of one particular junction. He is very eager that Windham should take his stand on the affairs of Ireland, and go out, if necessary, on the question of changing the Ministry there.

Windham seems to be impressed with the impossibility of doing any thing through the present men in Ireland. I sent him an extract from the Chancellor's speech in 1793 against the Catholic delegates, and in support of the Popery laws of Ireland, in which he stated all of that religious persuasion to be essentially traitors: and Windham owned he was satisfied. He then asked me as to the details of a new arrangement. I professed myself wholly unable to answer, but said I thought that was a subsequent consideration. The first thing was to settle the general principle, whether a fundamental change were necessary, and if so, what connexion of men must be received into the Government. Then, it seemed to me the natural and wisest mode of proceeding to give the new Ministers a fair and full confidence, and make the detail of arrangements in consultation with them. I was particularly asked about a new Chancellor, but that I avoided.

**** was sounded nearly in the same manner by ****. The latter considers Fitzgibbon as a

protégé of his own, he having first appointed him Solicitor General; but he said that private partialities, must now give way to publick safety: the Chancellor must go; but who should succeed him? Would Lord Chief Justice Carleton do; or would they take *an English Chancellor!* Would **** recommend ****?

I believe there is a disposition to send the latter, and to get **** if possible, to let it be considerd as a job for him. **** came to me the other evening in the House of Commons for the first time since I have been a member, sat down by me and was very gracious. He enquired very affectionately for ****, and regretted that he had not seen him since his arrival in town. His Lordship, however, is as correct on this subject, as he usually is in all his public sentiments. He answered ****, that he lamented the situation to which Ireland had been reduced, and which made it necessary in his opinion, contrary to his general wishes and inclinations, to have for that country a Government which more immediately belonged to the country itself: the connexion must in that respect be weakened for the present, to be preserved at all for the future.

Other topicks arose. The full admission of the Catholick claims seems to be agreed as of course; and Parliamentary Reform, as it is miscalled. **** had forgot the particulars of G. Ponsonby's former motion, but remembered the aristocratical

nature of it. The representation which he gave, seemed to be highly satisfactory, and he understood that it was intended to yield in that point also.

Should that take place, though G. Ponsonby's plan is the least exceptionable which I have seen, though it is most on the original basis of our constitution, being wholly built on the landed interest, by throwing in all the freeholders of £10 a year within four miles of every borough; yet as I think it too uniformly aristocratical in the same mode and kind of aristocracy even for me, and above all as it admits the necessity of altering the existing constitution, I shall consider it, if it really takes place, but as the first breach to let in ruin. Ponsonby has given notice, I see, of his motion next week. It may be useful, if he is not indiscreet in his manner of doing it. It will certainly be negatived, and then the new Government of Ireland could have a year before them at least without being goaded on that subject, and may give their ill success now as a reason, if they please, for not reviving the question hereafter.

Have you seen the Report of the Secret Committee in Ireland? What a horrible formed system of jacobinism had been established there! Actual tribunals, the sentences of which were carried into execution by assassinations, taxes levied, troops arrayed, and a train of ordnance provided. They had their emissaries in Scotland, where the lower orders, I am told, are exceedingly discontented.

The cause of the Olive-Branch, an American vessel laden with nearly fifteen thousand muskets and bayonets, and twenty-one brass field pieces, four pounders, which, it has been suspected, were destined to Ireland, comes on to-morrow in the Admiralty Court. I have just been looking into my papers, but I cannot prove what we so much suspect. The arms are stated to have been purchased by contract for the militia of Vermont, and to have been to be delivered at New York. The pretended contract was made in July last, and the vessel with the arms was stopped and seized near Scilly in *November last*, just coinciding with the time that Hoche's expedition was almost ready to sail against Ireland.

As to our domestick politicks, I gave you a hint of ****'s opinion in the beginning of this letter. He wants Pitt and the Grenvilles to go out; and Fox to form a junction with the Duke of Portland, Windham and the rest. Of himself he says nothing. Windham on the other hand wishes Lord F. the Duke of Leeds, and others, to be united with Fox, supposing the necessity of the latter coming into power; that there may be some check upon him, and that he may have an aristocratical authority to hold forth if he pleases, to some of his colleagues: but Windham says nothing of the Duke of Portland or himself. I see little chance indeed of safety and less of honour in either of

these schemes, and can form no speculation myself for a single instant, to which I can look with a rational hope.

> '- - - Cloud and ever-during dark
> Surround me, - - -'

If you think, my dear Sir, of throwing forth your thoughts on any of these subjects to his Lordship, or to W., you may do it as before through me. You may, if you will, suppose me to have consulted you upon the details of an Irish ministry, and the two schemes of a new ministry here, though in truth I despair too much to make a serious question about them. I would particularly wish your opinion as to Windham's going out on Irish affairs, if, what I think will hardly be, there should be a determination to grant every thing rather than a new administration there. Your authority would go a great way either with **** or Mr. W.

In another cover I shall send you some fragments of a letter from an Irish Barrister of good talents and principles to his brother here. If I get the whole, when Mr. Pitt has done with it, I will send it to you.

I have not yet got the two Secret Reports.

Remember me to Mrs. Burke. It is a long time since I have heard of your health. In all your long letters not a word upon that, no

less interesting subject than all the rest to my feelings.

What think you of the following description of—I had almost said our Parliament—but I mean of the Roman Senate—by Cicero: "Quo me dolore "affici creditis, cum alios malè sentire, alios nihil "omninò curare videam, alios parùm constanter in "susceptâ causâ permanere, sententiamque suam "non semper utilitate reipublicæ, sed cum spe, "tum timore moderari?" Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,
Ever most gratefully
and affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

P. S. I will thank you for a copy of Lord Kenmare's Petition, which no one here has seen.

LETTER LXXXI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Tuesday, May 30th, 1797.

THE accounts, which I have received from Woodford, give me great satisfaction. Shortly, I hope, it will be in my power to satisfy my own eyes and ears of his veracity; but our term will not be at an end, till the close of the week, and after that I expect my brother for some days on business.

The other day I had a very civil message from some of the poor Royalists of St. Domingo, for saying two or three words in their favour, and throwing out a general challenge on the same side, when Fox was pleased to impute to them the origin of all the crimes and horrors in that miserable colony. Fox told me afterwards in the House, that he formed his opinion wholly on Bryan Edwards's authority. I have since looked over that history, and find to my astonishment, that the principal channel of Edwards's information was a member of the Jacobin *Commission intermediaire appointed by Polveril and Santhonax.*

Several times I was disposed to have spoken on the proposition for a Parliamentary change introduced the other night by Grey; but I had unusually fatigued myself in the morning in two courts, before I went with the Oxford address in my scarlet robes to a hot levee room at St. James's. Had Windham risen, I was determined to have supported him. But in truth I feel very little spirit to commit myself much in battle by the side of a Ministry who betray their own cause, and who I know would make any failure of mine a new excuse for shabbiness in regard to the principles which I should maintain. I am attentive to all that is going on, turn all the topicks in my mind, and exercise myself in silence every night. My seat now, when I can get it, is generally in

the front row towards the bottom of the House, two or three from the bar on the Treasury-side.

I have lately received much pleasure from a letter of our old friend *Garat* in the French papers. He was a candidate for Versailles at the late elections, and complains bitterly of the open *royalism* of the Electoral Assembly there. When he entered, he was hustled, and there was a cry "Voilà l'infame, qui a lû le jugement à Louis "XVI." or to that effect. He was driven with hisses and all sorts of contumelies. He says too, that the scene was nearly the same in most other Electoral Assemblies. The new third seems, as far as they go, to be doing some good. They have appointed a committee to revise the laws against the clergy, and intimated an intention of repealing totally the declaration which has been substituted to the former oath. I believe also, they will repeal, or in some other way defeat the present abominable laws against emigrants. These things will be some consolation amidst the political destruction of the commonwealth of Europe. I shall not be surprised to see a considerable change for the better in France, and that she may begin to recover from the revolutionary madness, but not till she has ruined and overturned by external force and internal intrigues, every other part of the civilized world.

You will know much more of Ireland than I can tell you, from Lord Fitzwilliam and Dr. Hussey,

who, I understand, are now with you. As far as I can collect, Ministers are disposed to grant every thing to the Catholicks, and to give up the **** faction; but now the Ponsonbys have entangled themselves with a change in the form of Parliament, not only different from, but opposite to, their former plan.

I scrawl this from a committee room, and must now attend a little to the job, which I came honestly to support. I believe it to be of publick utility.

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever most gratefully

and affectionately yours,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER LXXXII.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Bath, 30th March 1797.

I HAVE but time for a very few lines. I send you back Lord F.'s note. As to the enclosure you refer to as coming by yesterday's post, I received no letter from you by that post, and consequently no enclosure. How this has happened I know not. Nothing can be more unlucky than the contrariety between your times in your Court and in the House of Commons. I can think of no way of reconciling them, even tolerably, but by your

taking the refreshment which you state to be necessary, in the chop-house of [the] Commons, during such a period of the debate as you think can best bear your absence. The whole proceeding of the Minority goes systematically and with unwearied application to the destruction of our credit at home, and of every connexion which we can have abroad.—This is not one of my best days; but though I have had much pain, I don't find myself proportionably weakened; and I am at this minute very easy. Mrs. Burke cordially salutes you; and in all states I am faithfully and affectionately

Yours,

E. B.

LETTER LXXXIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Beaconsfield, 1st June 1797.

It is not easy for me to describe to you the state of *** **'s mind. Indeed the condition of all affairs, of Irish affairs in particular, especially as they relate to him, both as a man and as a statesman, are enough to perplex a very clear understanding, such as in truth his understanding naturally is; but independently of these difficulties, which I feel to press equally upon any judgment of my own, he has those which result from his own

passions, from a strong predilection to Mr. Fox with regard to this side of the water, and a still stronger with regard to Mr. William Ponsonby on the other side. As to Mr. Ponsonby, he seems to be guided by nothing but his passions. He is by his natural temper perhaps the most vehemently irritable and habitually irritated of any person whom I have ever heard of—I mean of a man conversant with publick affairs; and he is even yet more hot in deliberation and council than he is in debate. * * * * has not only his predilections, but he is influenced, too much so in my opinion, though very naturally and very excuseably, by a rooted animosity against Mr. Pitt, and, indeed what he has not in particular to himself, an incurable suspicion of his sincerity. If his predilections had been returned by any correspondent degree of attachment or confidence on the part of Mr. Ponsonby or Mr. Grattan, I should not be inclined to blame the confidence which he has in them, because, independently of their conduct (under great provocations, I admit) they are, especially the latter, men of integrity and publick spirit; but they not only do not act in confidence or in concert with * * * * but they are actually engaged in personal connexion and combined in publick arrangements in a manner that would virtually exclude * * * * as much from all influence and direction in publick affairs as Mr. Pitt

does, or possibly can do. It is plain that Ponsonby has concerted the infernal plan of what he calls Parliamentary Reform, with the Opposition here, and eminently with his son-in-law, Mr. Grey, with whom he is connected full as much by politicks as he is by family ties. **** sees this Parliamentary Reform thus pushed in concert by the Opposition in both kingdoms exactly in the same light which you and I do, and yet without regard to the dreadful consequences which he forsees from this measure, and without regard to the total, at least temporary, alienation of those people from his confidence, his connexion, and his principles. I plainly perceive that if he was consulted, he would advise to throw every thing into their hands. If I am asked what I would myself advise in such a case, I should certainly advise the same, but with this temperament and express previous condition, that they renewed their confidence in ****, whom I hold to be the only person to settle Ireland; and that they give him some assurance as a man, a gentleman, and a friend, that they will be practicable about their schemes of changing the constitution of the House of Commons; and that they will desist from the scheme of an absentee tax, which in its principle goes more to the disconnexion of the two kingdoms than any thing which is proposed by the United Irishmen. As to Mr. Grattan's other project, of

laying new taxes upon English commodities, and the principle upon which he proposes it, — namely, that England is a foreign and a hostile kingdom and adverse in interest, [it] is, I think, a measure he would hardly persevere in. I think the difficulty of the case is extreme, when you consider the military government established on the one hand, and the wild democratick representation proposed as its cure [on] the other. If **** cannot be the Lord Lieutenant, a thing to which he never would consent, and indeed in prudence ought not to do, leaving an adverse Cabinet behind him, and if that adverse Cabinet be, as it is, full as little disposed to trust to him as he is to rely upon it, the only way in which he can be serviceable is in a mediatorial capacity; and this office of a mediator he certainly cannot perform in the temper he is in at present. I have entered into a very great detail with him, perhaps into too great a detail upon all those points, not being quite sure that I should live to converse with him again upon the subject; yet I am afraid that I have poured too much into a mind in itself over anxious and over full. He does not like, nor indeed do I much, the manner in which he seems to be indirectly and without the least confidence consulted about a particular member of an arrangement, I mean that of naming your namesake, Judge Lawrence, to be Chancellor of Ireland. It is plain that they mean some

change to satisfy the people, but not essentially to alter their system, or to bring in any man whose local weiglit and authority might counterbalance that of Lord Clare and his faction, or prove a gratification to any description of the people, or to facilitate any general arrangement; and they seem to want a sort of sanction from ****, with regard to a single member of some system with which he is wholly unacquainted. The thing was first suggested to him by Lord Carlisle, and Woodford in a letter to me made the same suggestion, to be communicated to **** as from Mr: Windham. He was naturally much against giving any opinion on the subject; for which he gave many good reasons; but he was so hurt at those unconfidential confidences, that he was for some time unwilling that I should communicate his reasons for declining any opinion in my answer to Mr. Woodford's communication. However, I persuaded him to let me do it, as I am sure that guarding himself by a prudent suspicion, he ought to be as open to hear, as cautious to determine upon any matter relative to Ireland. This is all with which I have to trouble you at present.

As to the state of my body since my return, I cannot help smiling at the thought of Woodford's seeing it in so gay a point of view; for I am sure if I should live to see you, you will rather think me a man dug out of the grave than as a man going,

as I am, into it. I am infinitely weaker than when I left this, and far more emaciated. " Pallor in ore sedet, macies in corpore toto." I look like Ovid's envy, but thank God without much envying any one ; and certainly not in a condition to be envied, except by those who prognosticate the dreadful evils of every kind which are impending over us. Adieu. Mrs. Burke salutes you cordially ; and believe me

Ever yours,

E. B.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that I have seen and conversed, though not enough, with Dr. Hussey ; but this I know, that he has stated facts sufficient to justify almost every thing which might have been considered as indiscreet in his pastoral letter.

LETTER LXXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Beaconsfield, 5th June 1797.

I AM satisfied that there is nothing like a fixed intention of making a real change of system in Ireland ; but that they vary from day to day as their hopes are more or less sanguine from the Luttrellade. The system of military government is mad in the extreme—merely as a system, but still worse in the mad hands in which it is placed. But my opinion is, that if Windham has not been

brought into an absolute relish of this scheme, he has been brought off from any systematical dislike to it. When I object to the scheme of any military government, you do not imagine that I object to the use of the military arm in its proper place and order; but I am sure that so long as this is looked upon as principal, it will become the sole reliance of Government—and that from its apparent facility, every thing whatsoever belonging to real civil policy in the management of a people will be postponed, if not totally set aside. The truth is, the Government of Ireland grows every day more and more difficult; and consequently the incapacity of the jobbers there, every day more and more evident; but as long as they can draw upon England for indefinite aids of men, and sums of money, they will go on with more resolution than ever in their jobbing system. Things must take their course.

As to the state of this kingdom, it does not appear to me to be a great deal better than that of Ireland. Perhaps in some points of view it is worse. To see the Thames itself boldly blocked up by a rebellious British Fleet, is such a thing as in the worst of our dreams we could scarcely have imagined. The lenitive electuary of Mr. Pitt's bill is perfectly of the old woman's dispensatory. The only thing which he spoke of, and which has any degree of common sense, is a general

association of the whole kingdom to support Government against all disorders, and all enemies foreign and internal; but I doubt whether he has stuff enough in him to carry it into execution. What is all this coquetting with Sheridan? and what, except shame, do they get by it? Farewell, and God bless you.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTERS

WITHOUT A DATE.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, probably in 1792.

I SEND you two papers—the Morning Herald has the Duke's paragraph of contradiction and declaration—the Morning Chronicle a declaration from Mr. Fox, with a most impudent addition of the editor's, instead of the Duke's paragraph. The Oracle, World, and Whitehall Evening Post, were all that would insert it on Saturday. Even these ministerial papers, contrary to my orders, have thrust it into an obscure corner. The Morning Post noticed the receipt of the Paragraph, but would not believe the authority; because it *affects to disclaim the manly sentiments of Mr. Fox, which no patriotic Member* CAN *disavow.* Thus is he derided and insulted by those who have eat his bread to his own beggary.

He and Lord Fitzwilliam seemed to think Fox's declaration something gained: I think it makes the matter worse and worse. The Duke himself

is by no means satisfied. I have just been writing a very long letter to Wyndham on the subject, and find that Adey has written to you. So I shall shorten my scrawl.

I am truly rejoiced in Richard's safe arrival*, especially since the late high winds. Believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Most sincerely

Your obedient, &c.

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER II.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Monday.

YOUR employment has been troublesome; but I hope it will not be fruitless. I think the efforts of the Faction are not at all abated, and that the evil they intend equally appears in their desperate boldness, and in their insidious hypocrisy. They have changed some of their notes since the riots at Birmingham. Now that their anniversary of *murder* has produced *arson*, and given it a direction they did not wish, they are the martyrs of order, good government, and sobriety—but, 'peace to all such;" a thing, by the way, they do not over eagerly desire. I wish you to persevere, since there are found amongst (what I still

* In Ireland, sometime in the Autumn of 1792.

am willing to call) our people, those, who like the principles of Payne, better dressed, or rather more disguised. I have not read, or even seen Macintosh;—but Richard tells me, that it is Paine at bottom;—and that indeed all the writers against me are, either Paines, with some difference in the way of stating, or even myself. I think to have done with the whole in the pamphlet which comes out to-morrow—I mean as to writing—for I am pretty clear that the Birmingham affair will come into Parliament; and that our first set-to there will not be also the last.

As to our proceedings. Mrs. Burke is much better, I think, as to her general health; but with regard to the stiffness in her limbs, there is little, I had almost said no amendment. However, we mean to continue here till Thursday se'nnight. If it suits you to come for so short a time—I need not tell you how happy you will make us. The sooner you set out, the better. It requires no great preparation to throw yourself, and a cloak-bag, not quite so long or so full as your person, into the coach. You will like this place. God bless you.

Most truly yours, &c.

EDMUND BURKE.

All here salute you cordially.

LETTER III.

TO MR. BURKE.

MY DEAR SIR, Doctors' Commons, Saturday Morning.

I AM truly sorry you have had the trouble of sending to me, as I am unfortunately under the necessity of disappointing you. Some little business will keep me in Town too late, I fear, for your arrangements. I shall therefore ride down to Beaconsfield either this evening or to-morrow morning, as may suit me best, and will bring any letters there may be, or any packet from Swift. I took some liberties with the Constitutional Society in the note about Ball's Sermon, but I know not whether the language of the old *Philosophers* may not require translating into rather more modern English; but of that I shall leave you of course to determine, when you see it.

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever most sincerely

Your obliged humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER IV.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR FRIEND, Saturday.

I HAVE not heard, since the day of my calamity, any thing which has given me half the comfort, which I received from your letter, which I received on this fatal Saturday morning. If your departed friend were with us, his satisfaction would have been at least equal to mine. The Duke has acted well. I do not know whether the letter I wrote to him, stating the intrigue he was to expect, and the consequences which would result from giving way to it, was of any use in fortifying him, or not. I had no answer; from which I augured nothing ill; as I was sure, that if he had given way he would have made some awkward apology. He has indeed done perfectly well; and if any thing can give us a chance, for protecting the laws of the Old world against the arms of the New, this step, I may fairly say has done more towards it, than any I could think of. May the God of law and order forward and protect you. You are far above the need of any counsel of mine. Follow where your own genius leads, and you will go right. The times are gloomy indeed. What good can be done by what I write? I have not been very well; nor am I. I am full of the detail of this school; but, please

God, I will set to the work, since you desire it; though I shall be torn limb from limb by all parties.

The Masters the good Bishop has furnished me with, are good and, virtuous men, I really believe; but I am afraid utterly unfit for this employment. God Almighty bless you. Mrs. Burke mends sensibly—and is able to go up stairs. She is abed—but will be full of comfort when she comes down. Again and again all sort of felicitation. This is good indeed.

Your ever, ever

EDMUND BURKE.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE not heard from Walker King—but he must stop the coming of any more Tutors, till we hear something of their capacity. They, or at least one of them, must speak English—the boys speak it as well as natives—and they will be ruined if they are put back and made foreigners again. The Bishop has been intolerable in this respect.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTER V.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Friday.

MRS. BURKE has passed three very quiet nights—her days too are tolerably good: but she does not gather strength. As for me, this India business has quite overwhelmed me. I send you the letters I have received in answer to mine. Take care of them. I shall do nothing publick till they are fully answered. I am about it, as far as my state of mind will permit. For God's sake, for I am now on my trial, at the suit of Mr. Hastings or his representative the General Court, let all the India books and papers, that Troward has, be got together, and sent home, as well as any you may have. They are my vouchers. I see I shall be driven out of this country. But they shall go with me. They are a vast body, and every moment I grow more and more anxious about them. I little thought a year ago that I should be ever so anxious about any earthly concern.

Have you ever read any thing like Lord Loughborough's letter? You see they are nursing up Hastings for the Peerage. I wish I could see you. Tell Mr. Windham that I have in effect finished and even printed two letters: but indignation strongly impels me to suppress them. Am I to be the Pimp of Indian peculation and oppression, and to

prove how right it is to raise a sharping Bullock Contractor above the common level of citizens? I am not up to this sublime as yet; whether it be the high sublime or the low. Mr. Elliot told me, that Mr. Windham has my letter to him about the Duke of Norfolk's attack.

I thank you for your Anderson notes. You have carefully selected all that can be found on the subject in that author. The more I think of it, the more convinced I am, that it ill becomes me to be an upping-block to Mr. Hastings, which it is plain they want me to be. God bless you. Adieu. Adieu.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER VI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I HOPE Lord Inchiquin's franks were not overloaded with the extraordinary letters I enclosed to you last night. What shall we say to this extraordinary convalescence, from frantick into fanatical insanity; so much method and such conclusive reasoning from principles so absurd. I confess if he does not get better, I should wish him rather to continue as ill as ever. These half madnesses are of all things in the world the most

mischievous. As his friend wished, I have written to him. The greatest part of my letter—expressions of kindness and news of his friends. The other matter is touched lightly—and I have undeceived him as to the numbers, and possible conversion of his Huguenots to Henry-the-fourth-ism. It would have been awkward not to mention the matter at all, and mischievous to oppose him too much, or to rest too long on the business.

As to my own madness—be assured I shall be as regular in it. I shall certainly precepitate nothing. If *I* were the sole consideration, Lord F.'s letter would have been decisive with me. I shall certainly kick down my molehill by morning. But what a dreadful example it is to add myself to the number of those who have successively betrayed the poor people of India! I am writing, now that my indignation is a little evaporated, an answer to the monstrous and provoking letter of the Chancellor, and another to Dundas. They will be long: but if I am forced to abandon the other affair, they will be but the more necessary. What you say of Lord F. is most true: he is the best of men; and one of the ablest—and not at all made for this age of half virtue and half sense, or of total prostitution. The other folly, I doubt of more and more. In the little squib I have one party for me; and the neutrals to be got. In the other every thing is adverse. What you say of the emigrant part is right; but I know hardly that

part which can be made tolerable to some without being wholly enervated. Adieu till I see you. Adieu. Adieu.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

P. S. The weather has been very favourable. Mrs. B. twice out on an airing; and the better for it each time. To-morrow, please God, if things continue mending, I propose to have her in the breakfast room.

LETTER VII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

A PROTEST is preparing, the end of a sketch of which I will send to-morrow, so as to be with you at night at Grosvenor-square: but as the day itself will give the best, and indeed the only conclusive lights for the protest, I wish, and so does Lord F., that you would call at Grosvenor-square in the evening. I am anxious about this. Adieu. I write on the road.

Your affectionate unhappy friend,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,— Sunday Evening.

Your letter is very comfortable to me upon all the points you mention; the college particularly, the Chancellor takes up very properly and on the most solid grounds. If he sticks to those, as I have no doubt he will, that infernal job never can take place, and it will be a good earnest given by Government, that every thing in future is not to be done as a job in church and in state. I have thought for some time that the Chancellor in Ireland must stand. I was very sorry for it—but I considered it as an odious necessity, that must be submitted to; but when I find that his removal was to be a job for * * * *, and that I know, by old and by recent experience, who and what * * * * is—I am satisfied: because I do not see what one good can be gained by it, to balance the odium and contempt that so scandalous an appointment must bring upon those whom I honour and esteem; particularly as no rational motive under heaven can be given for this kind of patronage. What! are they ignorant of his proceedings (if his shabby and prevaricating, as well as insolent conduct deserves the name of a proceeding) in the first session they have brought him into Parliament? Is this a specimen of their

vigour and discernment in the choice of magistrates of the highest order? and is ****, who has acted so by them, the person upon whose honourable, firm, and manly support, their administration in Ireland must turn? I was as sure as of my being, that Yelverton had been their choice. But I faithfully assure them, that the Irish Bar, in which there is not one man of name, but feels himself infinitely his superior, will consider it as an outrage on them. Had we in England—a person of great honour, spirit, talents, and learning, like West, or Broderick, or Gilbert, I should prefer an Englishman for a Chancellor. But since the law here is low indeed, infinitely lower than the law in Ireland, to pick out of it a man of straw, known to them, only by his either flying in their faces, or turning his back upon them, is a woful thing indeed. I hope in God they have not promised it to him. **** is a mongrel in respect of the policy—not Irishman enough to be known on that side of the water—not enough of a stranger to be reputed English; and no splendid person at either bar—he can be only chosen from personal favour: and good God, what are the personal qualities that intitle him to personal favour? Can he dance like Chancellor Hatton? If he cannot do that, what can he do? He is the dullest and most unpleasant of men. I shall be in Town, please God, on Tuesday. I am thoroughly sensible of the Chancellor's kindness;

but do not know whether we shall accept his obliging offer, as that will depend on our stay in Town. What can I stay for? Is it to see the whole frame of Europe torn to pieces, to raise **** over the heads of all the law in England and Ireland; and for this Helen to behold the World on fire? Cazales is here—Poor Nagle is come, but in a very poor state of health indeed. God bless you ever. I am very sick at heart.

Yours ever,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR, Wednesday.

I THINK the Speaker has acted very properly, wisely, and kindly; and when you see him, you will be so good as to tell him I say so. Hughes is here, and stays this day. I am obliged to attend to him, and therefore cannot write to you and to others so fully as I wish to do. Dupont is gone to London, so I cannot avail myself of his assistance in obeying your commands. As he is to settle his nephew, who has a talent for painting, in London, he cannot come down immediately. However to-morrow I propose to set about unpacking without him. I don't think I have kept Necker's defence; nor is it much matter, as it is

no better than a disgusting panegyrick on himself. I regret much more the loss of Monjoye's pamphlet in answer to it, which, I think, had some decisive facts against that archquack. There is a defence, of which I had only some of the numbers (for it makes more pamphlets than one) the best I have seen. The author's name—he was some advocate, of a very singular name, that I have forgot: I lent this too, and it has never found its way back to me. I have scarcely any thing about French affairs, in a state approaching to completeness, except my Avignonese collection, which, I believe, I have already put into your hands. God bless you. Things are in a dreadful way. No mental resource ever seems to have been thought of. Much of men, money, ships—of mind, nothing. Corpus sine pectore. Adieu. May we have strength of mind to bear the lot which we cannot keep off. All here salute you.

Ever most cordially yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER X.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Thursday.

I AM truly happy with the turn this business has taken. I suppose nothing, as yet, is to be said about it. Very few of the objects which my dear Richard had on his mind in dying, are, thank God, left wholly unaccomplished—the deliverance of Ireland from the hands of the Job ascendancy excepted—that was nearly done too—but Providence, for reasons above our wisdom, has suffered that great affair to be snatched out of the hands that alone seemed made for it. However he was saved that pang, worse than any he could have felt in the parting of that fairest of all souls from a frail human body. Here we are, and with thankfulness we acknowledge it, returned to that house, in which we had many such moments as we never can see more. Our thankfulness, very sincere, I hope, did not hinder us from feeling that we were come to a place in which there was none to rejoice in receiving us; none in whom we could rejoice by being received! But that is over—all over, all our domestick comforts, the only comforts, are all at an end; and if we look abroad—what a dreadful horizon!

What you say of Jack Nugent's family is worthy of your goodness of heart. Great advantages to it will be derived from your generous protection, I have no doubt; and we receive your intentions most thankfully, knowing as we do that the very line, in which we wished you to come in, must for a long time at least, be a barrier against all your hopes for yourself or for any body else: and we trust that you do not think that when your late friend, and myself, his unworthy and misplaced representative, wished you that seat, that any thing of the sort ever entered into our heads, much or little. Adieu till Saturday. Our cordial love to Woodford and Nagle, and to our friends on the south-side of Thames.

Ever most affectionately yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Tuesday Morning.

THE gentleman, whom you left with me, is easy and confident about the result of this day's business. He entered into a full detail of the whole money part of the transaction. With that I had indeed been before fully satisfied. The thing itself

is, he says, not at all new, either in the practice or the attack made upon it, nor in the approbation of Parliament; of which he gave an instance in the affair of the Hanover troops during Lord Grenville's short administration, and another in the reign of George the Second also, which I don't recollect. His precedents went back to the war of Queen Anne. They are not present to me. I suppose the matters will be found in the Parliamentary Debates. I find Mr. Pitt has had a large meeting of the Members, who are his friends, to whom he has explained the whole matter at large. He will attempt to turn the adversary, and to have a strong vote of approbation—but this I am not authorized to talk of. On the whole, since it is so ardently wished, that you should give a minority vote, I cannot think you could have a better occasion—it will open a way the better and plainer to the resistance of the other projects.

Ever and ever yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER XII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE, Nerot's, Tuesday.

I HAVE passed a night without a wink of sleep. This sleeplesness has rather given me employment in thinking, than that thought has interrupted my sleep. I have turned over the affair of the Subsidy in my mind, together with ****'s letter. On the coolest and maturest consideration, I am perfectly convinced of three things—1st, That the Subsidy proceeding is *not* illegal—2d, That *it is* unconstitutional, that is, against the spirit, use, and fundamental duties of the House of Commons—3d, That in the then state of things (whether induced by Mr. Pitt's want of a previous manly course of action, or not) it was necessary for the preservation of publick credit, and not to run across and traverse the Loan. The paper I enclose proves, I think, the last point. So that if you agree with me, I do not see but that your falling in with *.**.*, doing the thing with political modesty and management as you proposed, may be very right. I see it will be difficult to disentangle the political consequences of this proceeding from the constitutional. To come to a direct censure would damn the war and all our alliances. The first act of my opposition—was in conjunction with others to force Pitt's father and Lord Camden to take an act of

indemnity. But there, though the not sitting of Parliament, was a better excuse than here is had,—yet the act itself was directly *illegal.* But as to the unconstitutional tendency, there was none in it. They resisted for awhile the indemnity—but they were beat out of it. There was no censure, but on the contrary, the necessity was admitted—the obstinacy of adhering to prerogative, only blamed and scouted. The minority did not suffer by it—nor will Mr. Pitt, if he will be well advised. But this we shall talk over. Woodford may not be well. I wish to see you, if possible, before you go to the House. I dine at home. God bless you.

Yours ever,

E. B.

LETTER XIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

WE are obliged to *Woodford* for what he has attempted; he could do no more; and considering how well I know that Windham cannot bear to be solicited, he did more than I should have ventured to do. He has a way of his own of walking, and if we hope to do any thing with him, we must follow him, and not cross him in his walk. I am sure he is my only resource for being useful to any

human creature. I have nothing to say against the rule which Mr. Windham has laid down. He has adhered to it in all other cases, I take it for granted. As to any hope in the Commissariat of Musters, it is on the face of it, except in the case of a vacancy by death, wild, chimerical, and utterly hopeless. The office is the only resource; though I am utterly incapable of conceiving how a corps of foreign troops can be kept here in time of peace, especially, when I consider how little the disposition was to keep them up even in time of war, and that we shifted them upon Portugal as the only resource for saving them. However, this official chance, which I look upon to be nearly desperate, from the reasons I have given you, is the only thing that remains to us, and therefore it would be intolerable for me to preclude Nagle from attendance on the office in which alone he can have any hope to rise, by my keeping him here for my conveniency, at the expence of his almost certain ruin. I therefore propose to send him off on Monday or Tuesday morning—and tell Woodford so, and my reasons for it, with my best love and thanks. Nagle himself has nothing to do in this business, for he is too willing to stay; but it has never been my mode, I hope, to sacrifice other peoples existence to my accommodation. I confess to you I grow quite out of heart about any hope from what I may hereafter attempt in the way of writing. It must more and

more offend the people in power, and it will teach nothing either to them or to the Opposition. The former wish to make a *plausible* peace with France; the latter are resolved that it shall be a bad one, not only in substance but in appearance. A Ministry wanting to conciliate with the Regicides—an Opposition desirous to be incorporated with them. A pretty kettle of fish Mr. Pitt has cooked up about the Imperial Subsidy. All his trouble is from a want of direct and manly proceeding. I cannot think that his application of the vote of credit is, in strictness, illegal, or even unconstitutional, but sure I am that it is not direct, nor at all according to Parliamentary course, nor in its deviation warranted by any publick necessity. Had the subsidy been avowed as it ought to have been done, it would have given strength and credit to the alliance—And as to the remittance, it would have been open to him to consult convenience on that subject, as well as if the whole transaction had been concealed. In fact it was not such a secret as they thought; for it was publickly talked of at Bath last summer, to my knowledge, or at least to the end of autumn. I am afraid the whole of this business, in its not being done in the last Parliament, arose from the resolution of making peace, even separately from the Emperor.—I have had a letter from Hussey, giving me a woful account of the pranks that

are playing by the Lilliputian Directory in Ireland. Instead of preparing to resist the French, they are making war with all might upon Popery; "ex stultis insanos" some dæmon makes them. Adieu. God grant a submission to his will. I have had two or three bad days and nights, and though my flesh is further reduced, I do not find my strength impaired nor my spirits in any degree. God bless you.

E. B.

APPENDIX.

LETTER I.

FROM DR. LAURENCE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE WHIG CLUB.

SIR, Doctors' Commons, March 5th, 1793.

It is not without concern that I conscientiously feel myself compelled by some late proceedings of the Whig Club, to request you will do me the favour of withdrawing my name. I make this request separately and singly, because I wish to mark what I do as the act of an individual, not influenced by any man or set of men; and I do not assign my reasons, because it would be arrogant in me to suppose they would have any weight with a single member of the Club. They are fully sufficient for my justification to my own breast, and (I trust) to the world, if circumstances did or could demand a public explanation of them; I hope they would, in such an event, more than justify me,—obtain for me the approbation of the wise and the good.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER II.

FROM DR. LAURENCE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION.

SIR, Doctors' Commons, April 3d, 1793.

I AM induced to trouble you at the request of a friend, whom I have long sincerely valued, and whom the subject, on which he has now authorized me to write, will not lessen in my estimation,—Mr. Hamilton O'Hara. He lately addressed me a letter from Ireland, the contents of which I must in part communicate, and desire you, Sir, officially to lay before the Society.

" I was introduced (he says) into the Consti-
" tutional Society about fourteen years ago by
" Major Cartwright, a man for whom I have still
" a very high personal esteem; but I have never
" attended it since, nor paid any thing towards
" the purposes for which it was instituted.—*It is*
" *my wish to withdraw from it.*"

The Society may perhaps desire to know the reasons, which he assigns. These are, that " he " understands the Society is affiliated to the Ja-
" cobins;" that some time since " they raised a
" subscription to buy shoes for the French army;"
and that they have " copiously distributed Paine's
" pamphlet, a book which he thinks highly dan-
" gerous in these times."

Had not this opportunity occurred, I should not have thought it worth while to consume a single moment in writing to you respecting myself. The history of my connection with the Society is a mere blank, like that of Mr. O'Hara; with this difference only, that I have now *resided on the spot in London between eleven and twelve years.* Till within these few years I have regularly received an annual letter, which I have as regularly passed over with annual neglect. In truth I did not consider myself as really belonging to the Society; and this I intended to mark by my continued silence, the meaning of which, I believe, has not been misunderstood: for, as I have intimated above, your applications to me have for some time ceased. I presume, therefore, it is wholly superfluous for me to entreat——what, if the ceremony has been accidentally omitted, I do now entreat ——that the Society will, without delay, do me the signal favour of striking my name from their list. Believe me, Sir, it is an honour, of which I shall be much prouder, than I ever was of my unsolicited election.

I cannot however take my leave of the Society, without returning them my most sincere thanks. The schemes and projects of rash and pernicious innovation on unsound principles of extravagant theory, which have been proposed or recommended by the Society under the false name of Constitutional Information, have done more than any

thing within my reading to fix and confirm my attachment to the existing Constitution of my country, which I rationally admire and love, as founded in practical wisdom, and exemplifying altogether in the greatest possible perfection the union of liberty with public order.

I am Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER III.

FROM THE DUKE OF PORTLAND TO MR. BURKE.

Welbeck, Thursday, 10th Oct. 1793.

MY DEAR BURKE,

PERHAPS it had been better that I had literally followed your instructions, and acknowledged the receipt of your letter and observations which arrived here last Thursday by the return of the post. But you tempted me, and I was seduced. I could not help reading the observations as well as the letter, and although it is my decided intention to confine myself strictly to the latter, I am well aware of the difficulty of adhering to that resolution. I am very much obliged to you for all the objects and all the purposes for which you have sent me the paper of observations. I consider it as an additional testimony of the friendship I have so long had the happiness and credit of

possessing, and although in that point of view I must insist upon its being wholly unnecessary, I am not the less gratified by it or the less thankful for it. It is no disgrace to me to admit (and were it so I should feel no difficulty in avowing it to you, and indeed to the world) that my imagination, my feelings, my judgment, my conclusions, do not, and can not keep pace with yours. I have not the same sensibility, I have not the same fears, I have not the same confidence; but I want not a day of *compulsory* reflection to make me see the horrors of Jacobinism, and the duty of exerting my best efforts, (those I mean, which from their regularity and steadiness are likely to prove the most lasting) to resist, subdue, and finally extirpate the diabolical spirit in which it has originated. You may possibly remember my suspicions, my distrust, my dread of the setting up a free constitution in France; not that I envy the French more than you do the blessings of a free government, but because the true cause of Liberty is not to be polluted with unhallowed hands. The French I thought would be idolaters, they were not capable of being true worshippers, and consequently I dreaded, and with but too much reason, that that sober, discreet, and sound liberty, which it has cost us and must cost every other country, so much time and so much pains to obtain, would be reviled, would be disregarded, contemned, disgraced, and traduced.

I had not the foresight to imagine that the contest could have been so brought on, or have been likely to have had the issue with which we have been threatened, but I always thought that the attempt at freedom would not be successful in France, and would materially endanger that of this country. I therefore most perfectly agree with you in your opinion of the proceedings and doctrines which have produced this mischief abroad, and in your opinion of the war, which I think is for every thing, for which it is worth being born into the world. But still the merit of concurring in this sentiment, great, as I may be disposed to admit it to be, does not appear to me, upon the sole credit of that authority, sufficient to obliterate from my memory the share which those very persons, who are said to agree with me in principle had, and in my apprehension at this moment continue to have, in supporting and maintaining principles of a similar tendency to those which have brought on this general confusion in France and in Europe. I will act with any man at any time in the cause of good order and of civil society. But I am not Christian enough to turn the other cheek to the man who has given me a blow, nor can I lick the hand which has endeavoured to destroy me. I can forgive where I see a real disposition to repentance, I desire no man to disgrace himself, and I am positively certain that you are the last man who would consent to

my debasing myself. You were pleased to approve a letter I once wrote to the Duke of Richmond. I remember it with pleasure, because it argued a perfect coincidence in our opinions respecting the only basis upon which an administration ought to be formed. I do not believe there is more real difference in our opinions at this moment than there was at that. I think my principles are exactly the same—I mean they should be so. They do not teach me to consider as enemies those who profess to be under the influence of the same sentiments, but they require more proofs than one of this similarity. They call for a consistency of conduct, as a security, as a title for confidence; and should I observe the persons, who profess to agree with me in one case in principle, counteracting and undermining this very principle in another, it would seem to me unreasonable to expect and impossible to give that confidence, which I once was vain enough to hope might have been established, and which had it so pleased Providence, might have prevented the alarming crisis to which we have been brought. There was an evident want of good faith then, that want still remains; however, in conformity with the principles I have ever professed, in this great cause, and indeed in all its appendages, my support, such as it may be, will be given completely and unreservedly to those, be they who they may, who appear to conduct it to the best of their

abilities. Farther than this I cannot go—and so far seems to me to be advancing no farther than I have done, and should consider it my duty to do, in any occasion of peril or importance to my country. In this I may be mistaken, as I may have been in other instances. But I must acknowledge that where I have been in long habits of intimacy and friendship, where I have observed many and striking instances of very superior talents and judgment, the most incorruptible integrity, the most perfect disinterestedness, I am much disinclined to impute to bad motives a conduct however different and opposite it may be to that which I feel myself obliged to hold. This may be a great weakness, but it is a weakness I am not ashamed of confessing, and less so to you than to any friend I have.—I have now nearly done. I have only to thank you most sincerely for this testimony of your friendship and affection. It is not possible to esteem, value, or desire them more than I do; or to feel greater satisfaction than I always shall do in convincing you and all who belong to you, and the publick in general, that you have not a more sincere, more affectionate, or more grateful friend than I am.

Most truly yours ever,

PORTLAND.

LETTER IV.

FROM DR. LAURENCE TO THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

MY DEAR LORD, Beaconsfield, Oct. 20th, 1794.

When your Grace did me the honour of a long and confidential conversation on Saturday evening, I mentioned to you the anxiety, agitation, dismay and horrour, which afflicted the mind of our unhappy friend here on the subject of publick affairs. On my return yesterday, I did not find him more tranquil; neither did any thing which I thought myself at liberty to communicate, give him much relief. It is true, he felt a considerable degree of pleasure in finding your Grace's sentiments so fully agree with his as to the principle and mode of opposing the Jobbing of the College by taking up the person, who alone is regularly qualified under the statutes, and who seems designated for the Provostship by his present situation: He was also gratified to be told of your firmness in resisting the improper disposal of the late Mr. Hutchinson's other office; and above all he conceived some little hope from learning, that the great mischief which he dreaded, has not yet actually taken place. Yet his mind is still overwhelmed by the contemplation of the terrible prospect before us; at this moment too, immediately before the meeting of Parliament, when they, who alone feel no terror of French principles in this country, are

perplexed and confounded, but will derive new hopes and therefore new activity from the destruction of a Ministry formed for the very purpose of eradicating those principles; when abroad, all the old Governments of Europe are shaken to their very centre, and are every day more and more shewing their own internal debility and the insufficiency and indecision of their rulers; when they can only be confirmed and strengthened by the unanimity of all good men in this country, if even that will effect it, and consequently must be wholly lost, if there be an appearance of weakness and distraction here. Still, terrible as this prospect truly is, he would not sacrifice the honour and characters of yourself and Lord Fitzwilliam to a false appearance of unanimity; because your country and all Europe have an interest in your honour and characters. Were you deprived of them, every reasonable hope of the permanent security of this country, and through this country of all Europe, would just in that proportion be lessened and impaired.

To entrench on the strongest ground, what (both as a private friend and an individual necessarily interested, though not immediately engaged in publick affairs) he holds so dear and sacred in your Grace and Lord Fitzwilliam; he is most anxious that the whole question should be made to turn only on a clear publick principle. That principle I take to be the necessity of reforming the corrupt

system of Government in Ireland, both with a view to the better management and the greater tranquillity of that kingdom internally, as also to the nearer *dependence of that* GOVERNMENT on his Majesty and his Ministers in Great Britain. The appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam must be considered only as a step preparatory to this great object; not an end itself, but one, and a principal, among other means for the attainment of the best and noblest end. And the expediency and urgency of endeavouring to reform that Government at this highly critical moment must, I think, appear incontrovertible; since to quiet and consolidate every part of our own empire seems an indispensable requisite to give vigour to our efforts, too necessary, abroad.

To prove this principle to be the true motive on which you act in urging the nomination of Lord Fitzwilliam to the Government of Ireland, no man who has the honour of knowing your Grace and his Lordship will require more than his own observations on your conduct. But you will recollect, my dear Lord, that you are in a battle with corruption, which from its very nature, can never have a single feeling of liberality, and is now rendered desperate in this very contest. You will have a furious faction in Ireland eager and busy in misrepresenting you, and they will be assisted with more or less energy by all the corrupt and the weak among their numerous connexions here.

English corruption will make common cause with them, though unconnected with them, except by a sense of common danger. You will stand in this country between two parties, neither of them cordially attached to you, and in the event of your quitting office, having all their passions keenly excited by their different speculations on the consequences. The Leaders with all ostensible professions of candour will however, because for their own purposes they must, misrepresent different parts of your sentiments and actions; while the inferior members of those parties (who never really loved, and I trust never will love you, though I wish them subdued into silence by your virtues) will open all their mouths on both sides in unprincipled and unmanaged abuse or insidious panegyrics more mischievous than their invectives. I trust that you would sustain all these attacks without injury in public opinion, as I am sure you would in the just judgements of all good and wise men. But these latter are a feeble aristocracy, if any contrary impression be made on the Sovereign multitude. And in a moment like the present, it is of the highest importance to the well-being if not to the very existence of civil society, that the reputations of such men as yourself and Lord Fitzwilliam (and I mean to include also not only Windham, but generally all those who took office with you) should not be exposed to the hazard even of a scratch, that can be avoided.

As in accepting your present situations, your long abstinence (longer certainly than some of your most sincere well-wishers thought necessary) satisfactorily evinced the purity of your motives in taking at last your share of responsibility under the most unpromising aspect of affairs: so your conduct in vacating those situations (if the world be indeed to experience so cruel a calamity) ought not only to be capable of the most honourable explanation, but to be clear from all possibility of misrepresentation, and even to preclude discussion. It should prove itself in the very act. How then can this be most effectually attained; by resigning on a question, essentially connected indeed with the execution of the main principle, but not directly involving the principle itself, or by being turned out on a question, which does directly involve the principle? So nakedly put, the doubt seems to me to answer itself. I do not positively know, but I believe, it was a train of reasoning, something of this kind, though I doubt not more forcible and convincing in its several steps, which ultimately settled Mr. Burke's mind in the decided opinion (which he authorizes me to declare) that your Grace and Lord Fitzwilliam ought *not* instantly to *resign*, if the continuance of Lord Westmoreland be carried against you: He has revolved the matter again and again in his thoughts; he has viewed it in every light, that his imperfect knowledge of all the circumstances would allow; and in his con-

sideration of it, he has divested himself of all personal feelings, except (as the greatest minds will shew some human infirmity) a most unfeigned and jealous zeal for the honour and characters of your Grace and Lord Fitzwilliam, which at the same time he endeavoured to purify by referring it to the publick interest, which the great cause of mankind has in your good names at the present moment. The result of the whole is what I have already stated. I fancy, he will write to Lord Fitzwilliam by his own servant, who will bring this to your Grace. Perhaps he will himself assign his own reasons to Lord Fitzwilliam. Will your Grace however permit me, long as this letter already is become, to submit to your better judgement some of the arguments, which either suggested in substance by him, or occurring to my own mind, have induced me to agree in his opinion —not that you should compromise with corruption, but that you should maintain those posts, and chuse that field of battle, which will enable you to continue the most obstinate combat against it to the last; perhaps to conquer, certainly to retreat without being harassed? Whatever may be the weight of these arguments, your Grace I am sure will do justice to their sincerity.

Most of the resignations, which we have seen— not of individuals, but of parties—were probably influenced by the great example in the late reign, when Lord Carteret was so driven to break up his

administration of two days: but none have had the same success. At this moment it requires little sagacity to discover, that such a measure is less likely than ever to be successful, in the present broken state of political connexions. It can now only be rationally viewed, as sometimes necessary in vindication of honour and character; and this is a necessity, of which the most virtuous and exalted minds are most liable to judge with too quick a sensibility. Your Grace and Lord Fitzwilliam are not men, whose integrity is now for the first time to be tried. To pass over all your former publick lives, the little haste, which you manifested to get into office, seems to render it less incumbent on you to be hasty in going out.

But all this is general. What is the particular question on which in the first instance you must resign? The recall of one Lord Lieutenant, and the appointment of another. I know this to be essential to the full and compleat effect of the laudable and enlightened principle, which you have in view. I know too, that your object in making this a question will not be misunderstood by the few, whose approbation is most valuable, next to that of your own consciences: but publick opinion is necessary to the utility of publick men, and ought therefore to be managed, where it does not demand the sacrifice of a principle. It may fairly be allowed most authority in questions of publick character. The change of the Lord Lieu-

tenant you must be aware, my dear Lord, is open to a double interpretation. He may be changed for that excellent object, which is your aim; but he may also be changed on bad motives, or on motives of personal passion, as well as on pure publick principle. He may be changed for the sake of power and patronage to be employed well or ill. They who resist the change, cannot interpret, what you do, in the most favourable manner, without accusing themselves. You know, what construction will be attempted, because you know, what has been attempted to be given to your virtuous firmness on this subject. It will then become, if you resign on this point, a question of motives to be discussed before the publick. That conduct, which is meant to be the justification of your characters, will itself be to be justified by those very characters. In the meantime, if you are once out of office, you can in no degree support with any comparative effect the great principle, for the sake of which, you wish the change of the Lord Lieutenant.

Suppose on the other hand, that you were in the first instance to leave the propriety of changing Lord Westmoreland for Lord Fitzwilliam, entirely and directly to his Majesty, making at the same time in writing a strong, grave, and dignified declaration of your motives for desiring the change; accompanying it with a concise but pointed exposition of some among the more flagrant abuses,

that demand an alteration of system in that Government; releasing yourselves from the heavy responsibility of continuing Lord Westmoreland there; and adding to all an avowal of your steady resolution, as bound in duty to his Majesty, your country and yourselves, to resist to the utmost every specifick act of corruption. You will then have to take issue on the detail of jobs, and you have strong questions of the kind now pending from the death of Mr. Hutchinson, and may expect more from the death of the Primate. As, I conceive, every recommendation must in some stage of its progress at least, pass through your Grace's hands, you will have an opportunity of recording your sentiments upon it, to remain for ever in the office with the paper itself; and if the forms of office require the seals in your Grace's custody for the authentication of any instrument, you will in all such cases have an absolute negative in your power. If you conquer in this war of posts, every victory will in itself be so much actual good done, and will so far advance your ruling principle; and very few such victories repeated will shake to its foundation the abominable Government, to the system of which you are, as you ought to be, hostile.

LETTER V.

FROM MR. BURKE TO THOMAS KEOGH, ESQ.
GRAY'S-INN COFFEE-HOUSE.

SIR, Beaconsfield, 17th Nov. 1796.

I AM so much out of the world, that I am not surprized every one should be ignorant of, as he is uninterested in, the state of my health, my habits of life, or any thing else that belongs to me.

Your obliging letter of the 20th of July was delivered to me at Bath, to which place I was driven by urgent necessity, as my only chance of preserving a life, which did not then promise a month's duration. I was directed to suspend all application to business, even to the writing of a common letter; as it was thought that I had suffered by some such application, and by the attendant anxiety, before and about that time. I returned from Bath not well, but much recovered from the state in which I had been; and I continued in the same condition of convalescence for a month or six weeks longer. Soon after I began gradually to decline, and at this moment I do not find myself very materially better or stronger than when I was sent to Bath.

I am obliged to you for the offer which you made in that letter, of conveying any thing from me to Ireland; but I really thought you had

known that I have no kind of correspondence or communication with that country, and that for a good while I had not taken any part whatsoever in its affairs. I believe you must have observed when last I had the honour of seeing you in London, how little any opinions of mine are likely to prevail with persons in power here, even with those with whom I had formerly a long and intimate connexion. I never see any of His Majesty's Ministers, except one gentleman, who, from mere compassion, has paid me some visits in this my retreat, and has endeavoured by his generous sympathy to sooth my pains and my sorrows: but that gentleman has no concern in Irish affairs, nor is, I believe, consulted about them. I cannot conceive how you or any body can think that any sentiments of mine are called for, or even admitted, when it is notorious, that there is nothing at home, or abroad, in war, or in peace, that I have the good fortune to be at all pleased with. I ought to presume that they who have a great publick trust, who are of distinguished abilities, and who are in the vigour of their life, behold things in a juster point of view than I am able to see them, however my self partiality may make me too tenacious of my own opinion. I am in no degree of confidence with the great leader either of Ministry or Opposition.

In a general way, I am but too well acquainted with the distracted state of Ireland, and with the

designs of the publick enemy pointed at that kingdom. I have my own thoughts upon the causes of those evils. You do me justice in saying in your letter of July, that I am a true Irishman. Considering as I do England as my country, of long habit, of obligation, and of establishment, and that my primary duties are hers, I cannot conceive how a man can be a genuine Englishman, without being at the same time a true Irishman, though fortune should have made his birth on this side the water. I think the same sentiments ought to be reciprocal on the part of Ireland, and if possible with much stronger reason. Ireland cannot be separated one moment from England, without losing every source of her present prosperity, and even hope of her future. I am very much afflicted, deeply and bitterly afflicted, to see that a very small faction in Ireland should arrogate it to itself to be the whole of that great kingdom; I am more afflicted in seeing that a very minute part of that small faction should be able to persuade any person here, that on the support of their power the connexion of the two kingdoms essentially depends. This strange error if persevered in (as I am afraid it will) must accomplish the ruin of both countries. At the same time I must as bitterly regret, that any persons who suffer by the predominance of that corrupt fragment of a faction, should totally mistake the cause of their evils, as well as

their remedy; if a remedy can be at all looked for; which I confess I am not sanguine enough to expect in any event, or from the exertions of any person; and least of all from exertions of mine, even if I had either health or prospect of life commensurate to so difficult an undertaking. I say, I do regret, that the conduct of those who suffer should give any advantage to those who are resolved to tyrannize. I do believe that this conduct has served only as a pretext for aggravating the calamities of that party, which though superior in number, is from many circumstances much inferior in force.

I believe there are very few cases which will justify a revolt against the established Government of a country, let its constitution be what it will; and even though its abuses should be great and provoking; but I am sure there is no case in which it is justifiable, either to conscience or to prudence, *to menace resistance* when there is no means of effecting it, nor perhaps in the major part any disposition. You know the state of that country better than I can pretend to do, but I could wish, if there was any use in retrospect, that those menaces had been forborn; because they have caused a real alarm in some weak though well intentioned minds; and because they furnish the bold and crafty with pretences for exciting a prosecution of a much more fierce and terrible nature than I ever remember, even when the country was under a system of laws, apparently

less favourable to its tranquillity and good government, at the same time that sober exertion has lessened in the exact proportion in which flashy menaces encreased. Pusillanimity (as often it does) has succeeded to rage and fury. Against all reason, experience, and observation, many persons in Ireland have taken it into their heads, that the influence of the Government here has been the cause of the misdemeanour of persons in power in that country, and that they are suffering under the yoke of a British domination. I must speak the truth—I must say, that all the evils of Ireland originate within itself; that it is the boundless credit which is given to an Irish Cabal, that produces whatever mischiefs both countries may feel in their relation. England has hardly any thing to do with Irish Government. I heartily wish it were otherwise; but the body of the people of England, even the most active politicians, take little or no concern in the affairs of Ireland. They are, therefore, by the Minister of this country, who fears upon that account no responsibility here, and who shuns all responsibility in Ireland, abandoned to the direction of those who are actually in possession of its internal Government: this has been the case more eminently for these five or six last years; and it is a system, if it deserves that name, not likely to be altered.

I conceive that the last disturbances, and those the most important, and which have the deepest root, do not originate, nor have they their greatest

strength, among the Catholicks: but there is, and ever has been, a strong republican Protestant faction in Ireland, which has persecuted the Catholicks as long as persecution would answer their purpose, and now the same faction would dupe them to become accomplices in effectuating the same purposes; and thus either by tyranny or seduction would accomplish their ruin. It was with grief I saw last year with the Catholick Delegates a gentleman, who was not of their religion, or united to them in any avowable bond of a publick interest, acting as their secretary, in their most confidential concerns. I afterwards found, that this gentleman's name was implicated in a correspondence with certain Protestant conspirators and traitors, who are acting in direct connexion with the enemies of all government and religion. He might be innocent; and I am very sure that those who employed and trusted him, were perfectly ignorant of his treasonable correspondences and designs, if such he had; but as he has thought proper to quit the King's dominions about the time of the investigation of that conspiracy, unpleasant inferences may have been drawn from it. I never saw him but once, which was in your company, and at that time knew nothing of his connexions, character, or dispositions.

I am never likely to be called upon for my advice in this, or in any business; and after having

once almost forcibly obtruded myself into it, and having found no sort of good effect from my uncalled for interference, I shall certainly, though I should have better health than I can flatter myself with, never again thrust myself into those intricate affairs. Persons of much greater abilities, rank, and consequence than I am, and who had been called by their situation to those affairs, have been totally overwhelmed by the domineering party in Ireland, and have been disgraced and ruined; as far as independence, honour, and virtue can be ruined and disgraced. However, if your leisure permits you to pay a visit to this melancholy infirmary, I shall certainly receive any information with which you are pleased to furnish me; but merely as news, and what may serve to feed the little interest I take in this world. You will excuse my having used the hand of a confidential friend in this letter, for indeed I suffer much by stooping to write.

I have the honour to be, &c.

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTER VI.

PART OF A LETTER FROM DR. LAURENCE.
WITHOUT AN ADDRESS.

DEAR SIR, Doctors' Commons, Nov. 30th, 1796.

THE introduction, which I received from the friendship of Mr. Burke to the honour of your acquaintance, has more than once almost encouraged me to obtrude myself upon you. But it could very little have interested you to know, that one humble individual more entertained a just sense of your publick integrity and wisdom. The uninfluenced addresses which poured in from every part of Ireland to Lord Fitzwilliam, after his recall, were *in truth the best testimonies*, not only to the Lord Lieutenant, but to his confidential advisers, in the foremost rank of whom you stood.

You may possibly have learned from the newspapers, or by some accidental channel, that I have now begun to be a publick man. I am,—not in the modern philosophical sense, but in the true old legal and constitutional style—a citizen; one of the citizens in Parliament assembled. On the death of Mr. Benyon, the friends of Lord Fitzwilliam at Peterborough did me the honour of recommending me to their brother Electors, who chose me their representative. Believe me, I would not have accepted the offer of that nomination,

however flattering, if I had not conscientiously agreed with his Lordship in all the general principles of his political conduct, of which his short government of Ireland (too short for the happiness of that kingdom and the prosperity of the whole British empire) forms a very prominent part.

The present situation of your country, and the declared alarms of Lord Camden and his Council, will probably force forward some discussion here. Indeed Mr. Fox has intimated his intention, and is expected to give a formal notice on the subject. I know not whether I may take any share in the debate, but it is my anxious wish at any rate to be fully master of the question, should the turn which it may take, or the impulse of my own mind at the moment, induce me to break my silence. I acquainted Lord Fitzwilliam with my purpose of requesting you to favour me with such communications, as you might think most expedient: and his answer was, that I could do nothing more pleasing to him than to open a correspondence with you.

My general notions of the evils under which Ireland suffers, I explained both to his Lordship and to Mr. Burke separately; and I have the pleasure to add, to the satisfaction of both. I need not therefore enlarge upon my opinions here. I am sure you will take my sponsors. The radical evil I conceive to be the system of government,

by which the confidence of the people is made a positive disqualification for power, and the only sure title is a want of all principle; for which merit alone, a little cabal is protected and perpetuated in office, till the members of it have tied up all the patronage of the Crown, so as scarcely to have left the means of rewarding publick services in others, if His Majesty were disposed to make a change.

LETTER VII.

FROM DR. LAURENCE TO LORD LOUGHBOROUGH.

Doctors' Commons, Sept. 27th, 1797.

MY DEAR LORD,

OCCUPIED, as you must be, especially at this very momentous crisis, with affairs of so much greater importance, I cannot but be highly flattered by the honour which you have done me in writing so long a letter. It was the more kind, as your Lordship feels yourself so wholly disinterested in the question. Indeed I very well know, how many testimonies you have at different times received of our deceased friend's approbation; and I know also, with what sincerity he gave them. Most, if not all of them, he originally shewed to me; and copies of one or two of them have been found among his papers.

On the letter to Lord F., of which I sent an extract, your Lordship has said much more than

would have been sufficient to satisfy my mind. You and Mr. Anstruther, it seems, differ very essentially from Mr. Burke in your impression of the conversation that passed at your house. That was enough immediately to determine me against the publication of the letter. As nothing directly demands such a step for the necessary explanation of any part of Mr. Burke's conduct, I do not think that I ought to put your Lordship and Mr. Anstruther to the disagreeable alternative of seeming to confirm by your silence a representation which you do not believe to be correct, or of raising a publick discussion on the subject, especially on the sentiments of the noble person, now dead, who is the most prominent figure in the short account, which Mr. Burke gave, not of the whole conversation indeed (that he never intended,) but of its practical result. With the view of ascertaining whether any such material contradictions in point of fact did any where exist, I communicated copies or extracts to several, and should have communicated them to all, whose names are there mentioned by Mr. Burke. But your Lordship's answer will render any further enquiry superfluous.

Thinking in the manner which I have taken the liberty of stating, I lost no time on the receipt of your Lordship's letter, in stopping the preparations which I had made for beginning to print as soon as I should have collected the opinions of the persons most concerned, if no peremptory objection

should be offered. I could not absolutely abandon the purpose of publication till I had consulted Dr. King. He came to town yesterday. I was the whole of this morning with him. He appears fully to agree in all my general sentiments on the subject, and the publication will not proceed.

Permit me however, my dear Lord, to trespass a little on your patience with regard to the principles which on this occasion you have laid down. They interest me deeply. They relate to the conscientious discharge of the sacred trust which I have undertaken—not the care of Mr. Burke's reputation, (he will have no posterity to enjoy that most glorious inheritance) but the task of holding out the purest example to the imitation of all public virtue. Ill would that great end be promoted, if I should do any thing, even of dubious morality. It has always been my endeavour to the best of my abilities, such as God has given me, to understand my moral duties. I have meditated still more upon them, since I became a public man, to the extent that I am such; and more so I do not wish to be in the present awful crisis of the country, in which, if even the grand impending danger should pass away, I see almost every symptom, that has usually forerun the downfall of great states under free constitutions. If I have erred, or shall err in my duty, as an adviser of Mrs. Burke it will be from a defect of judgment, not from a want of consideration, the best which

I can give to every question. But if after all I am only the more deliberately wrong, I am unfit for an adviser.

In one sense I assent to the rule which your Lordship has laid down, "that nothing should be given to the public by representatives, which it would have been improper for the person they represent to have committed to the press." If it be meant "*morally improper*," I see no exception to the rule. But there are a thousand little personal considerations of delicacy and even of prudence which naturally end with the life of the man.

Your Lordship thinks it contrary to morality that, "any letters should appear which relate to "intimate and familiar conversations, where in "mutual confidence the parties concerned express "to each other their sentiments and opinions on "men and things." This, my dear Lord, is a nice question, as I view it, and on the very confines of opposite duties. If it were to be taken in the full latitude which you seem to give it, I am afraid it would go to the annihilation of all history worth reading. I have never seen or heard the morality of Atticus impeached, for publishing the valuable series of Cicero's Letters, which could only have come directly or indirectly from him, and which, there is reason to think, must have been published, while many of the persons very freely mentioned in them were still alive. Posterity has uniformly

applauded the act. Perhaps those letters, for real instruction, are worth all ancient history put together. On the other hand, if we were too literally and without any limitation to apply to all, what Mr. Burke in one of his letters nobly says of himself, "that he had no secrets with regard to the publick," much mischief would undoubtedly ensue to private society. I scarcely know how to express myself accurately on the subject, but with reference to some particular case. Wherever I find any doubt in the execution of my trust, I shall lean rather to over-caution than too much laxity. If I were to lay down any general rule, it would be something to the following effect—That no hasty letters of unreserved familiarity should be published, where they contain free and perhaps momentary opinions of men and things, or recite accidental, loose, and vague conversations; but that I should not so class long and formal letters in the nature of protests, containing deliberate opinions, or relating the substance of consultations had among public men for the systematic guidance of their public conduct. These, it should seem to me, under the correction of your Lordship's better judgement, have nothing in their own nature, which should make it improper to give them to the public, *if the situation of things, to which they refer, has actually passed away.* At the same time care should be taken that others be not

committed by representations of their sentiment, which they do not acknowledge; and this was my object in sending round copies and extracts on the present occasion.

The letters, of which Mr. Burke kept copies, and which he spared when he burned a great number of papers, I always understood him to have preserved, as a sort of historical documents. There are very few of them which contain recitals of any conversations or consultations. Of his voluminous correspondence (as it must have been) with Lord Fitzwilliam, I have not found the complete copy of any other letter than that of the 29th of November 1792; and that is in the handwriting of Swift, to whom he never gave his really private and confidential letters to be copied. What can have been the meaning of this marked distinction with respect to this single letter? Does it not clearly show a distinction in the mind of the writer as to its nature and classification?

I sent a copy to Lord Fitzwilliam and to Mr. Windham, neither of them immoral men, and the latter more implicated than any other man, in different parts of Mr. Burke's narrative; yet they made no general objection to the nature of the letter, as what it would be immoral to publish. Neither did Mr. Windham seem to think the statements materially untrue or inaccurate. If, unfortunately for me, your Lordship should still

continue to doubt my morality, I believe I shall rest contented with my three compurgators, without looking for the other nine.

Your Lordship thinks also that it would not be proper to give a corrected copy of Swift's surreptitious publication. Certainly not because any confidential conversations are divulged in that paper. It relates wholly to the public actions of the minority at that time, and particularly of Mr. Fox; but it was intended for private use only, and was drawn up, in a moment of just exasperation, in a style and manner unfit for the public eye, though to the day of his death Mr. Burke steadfastly adhered to the sentiments and principles contained in it. It has, however, been sent forth by an act of villainy, and cannot be recalled. Notwithstanding your Lordship's friendly and equitable promptitude in granting your injunction against it, three thousand copies at least were sold, and exist in the three kingdoms. Extracts from it appeared in all the newspapers, as the production of Mr. Burke: it was noticed in all the reviews; and I heard it quoted to be answered in debates of the House of Commons, twice in one night, by Mr. Erskine first, and afterwards by Mr. Sheridan. If the works of our deceased friend shall ever reach posterity (as they more especially deserve to do, for the rich fund of wisdom which they contain) it will be impossible to prevent this tract from finding its way into the

collection. If any future antiquary should doubt its genuineness, he might authenticate it from the records of your Lordship's court, from the evidence on which the injunction issued. From the "repositories of Mr. Burke" it will in no case receive more than a sort of posthumous authentication. No perfect copy was found there, but one of the spurious edition, corrected in Mr. Burke's handwriting. To all at Bath who asked him he related the history of the paper, but avowed the substance of the sentiments. He expressly authorized me to explain the circumstances in the most public manner, but charged me and all his friends never in any degree to countenance a notion of his retracting the substance of any one sentiment of it. It was not without much pain that Mrs. Burke, Dr. King, and myself, after considering all, and weighing objections similar to those of your Lordship, ultimately found ourselves under the necessity of chusing, as the least of two evils, to print a correct copy, with the real introductory letter to the Duke of Portland, which has never been published, which will shew Mr. Burke's feelings on the occasion in a favourable point of view, and of which he did himself keep a fair copy, as a general, "solemn and even testamentary protest;" and to prefix to both in an explanatory preface, an extract from a private letter from Bath to me, when he first received intelligence of Swift's scandalous breach of trust:

rather than to seem totally to abandon in his name, what he essentially confirmed, though under some modifications, almost on his death bed. Your Lordship, I am certain, must have done us the justice to believe, that we had not lightly and flippantly decided in this option of difficulties. You will therefore pardon us, if we adhere in this instance to our former resolution.

I am ashamed to detain your Lordship so unconscionably; but will you allow me once more to resort to the letter of November 1792, addressed to Lord Fitzwilliam? It relates to a distinct period in Mr. Burke's life, when, after his first separation, he endeavoured to act in corps again with one division of his party, and it was his protest on that occasion. I shall hereafter certainly rely upon its authority, though without quoting it, or naming either persons or places, unless where I am fully warranted by the express consent of the party; and I shall rely upon it only as containing his impressions and his opinions. But I think it right to inform your Lordship, why I am disposed to give it rather more credit, than I might otherwise be expected to do, after your Lordship's observations upon it. It is not of a date long after the fact, as your Lordship and Mr. Anstruther imagine, misled perhaps by my having sent only an extract. The whole letter contains the narrative of only twenty days preceding the date, from the

9th to the 29th of November; during which period he was twice in town, the *second time* to attend at your Lordship's dinner. It is the latest fact to which he speaks in the letter from his own knowledge. I am thus accurate in these dates, because for another purpose I had occasion to trace Mr. Burke's motions about that time. He was at Bath in the autumn of 1792, and did not return from that place to Beaconsfield till the 8th of November, as appears from his servant's account book of bills paid upon the road. There can be no mistake in this. Mr. Anstruther, after an interval of five years may have confused the recollection of one dinner with another.

Mr. Burke was of opinion, that nothing was done at the meeting in question; that is, nothing towards bringing any number of his and your friends to act together with decision on those good principles, which they certainly then held in common. Your Lordship draws a different inference, and considers it as supported by the sequel. I confess, my dear Lord, that I have ever regarded the sequel as making for him. I have ever understood (you will be so good as to forgive and instruct me better, if I have been wrong) that your Lordship's principal motive for consenting to take office alone, after you had twice refused it, was the impossibility of finding any steady support in doing your duty to your country out of power.

My approbation, I am sensible, is of little value; but on these grounds it is, that I have ever approved your acceptance of the seals, under all the circumstances of that day, as a virtuous and manly act.

This letter, which I began last night, has run to such a length, that it was impossible for me to send it before I presumed that your Lordship would go to the Drawing Room. If you should wish any further explanation, I can attend your Lordship as early as you please before you set off to-morrow.

I have the honour to be, with all esteem and rsepect, my dear Lord,

Your Lordship's

Obliged and faithful humble Servant,

FRENCH LAURENCE.

LETTER VIII.

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER FROM MR. BURKE TO LORD CHANCELLOR LOUGHBOROUGH.

WITHOUT A DATE.

MY DEAR LORD,

I AM to inform you, that your good-natured presentation has had its full effect, and that Mr. Etty is parson of Whitchurch. By that one arrangement your Lordship has the satisfaction of making several people happy; the person who resigned the living not the least so. Your protégé is much

attached to a very pleasing young woman, the daughter of a worthy clergyman in this neighbourhood. Without this preferment there was no hope of their union. All the parties have a considerable degree of merit; and they feel much gratitude for the happiness they enjoy, and the good prospect, which, in their estimate, lies before them. I am sure I am myself extremely obliged to you on this occasion, and should think myself much to blame, if I neglected to make you my best acknowledgements.

We must enjoy those transient satisfactions as they arise, without enquiring too minutely into their probable duration. God knows how long the Church Establishment, on which these people exist, and to which such multitudes are now breeding up, is likely to last. But whenever that goes, it will go with every thing else.

When that grand period will arrive, it is not easy to foresee with exactness: but there are plain and evident marks of its approach. I don't mean, that they appear in the event of this or that measure (though the prospect in that point of view is gloomy enough,) but in the dispositions of men, which prepare bad events and improve accidental misfortune into systematick ruin. I very much doubt whether in any country, they who have the charge of us the poor flock, are sufficiently aware of the giant-strides with which the great overbearing master-calamity of the time is advancing

towards us. All you, the Great, act just as if you thought a thousand things were to be feared or pursued for their own separate sakes, when, in reality, none are worth notice, otherwise than as they tend to promote or resist the cause of Jacobinism. What amazes me, even to consternation and horrour, is, that people, otherwise of the very best understandings, proceed exactly as if every thing stood in the situation, in which you and I saw them thirty years ago, at a time when very great errours led but to very slight consequences; and not as they are now, when very slight mistakes lead to incalculable evils. Then the greatest changes, which could be apprehended, could very little affect the domestick happiness of the greater part of mankind;—now no man's fireside is safe from the effects of a political revolution.

I confess that the conversation I had with your Lordship, when you were kind enough to pay a short visit to this melancholy abode, filled me with no small uneasiness at that time and ever since. From the tenour of that conversation I collected, that if the Ministry should exist at all in the form it had lately taken, it must lose for ever that cement of cordiality, of co-operation, and of unity of design, for which alone political coalitions are worth pursuing and framing.

This disunion has happened at the time, in the manner, and on the subject, which of all others is calculated to render it fatal. We see our way but

ill before us! I thought that the reputation and the permanence of Mr. Pitt's Administration was the very corner-stone of the salvation of Europe. I thought that the junction lately made was the security of that angular piece. You know that although I had no share in the executive detail (a thing for which I have little capacity and no liking) how ardently I wished, how earnestly I laboured for, and how truly I rejoiced in, the late arrangement. But would to God, it had never been made! without it there was a possibility (in truth, no more than a possibility) of avoiding ruin. But now, at least in my bosom, every ray of hope is extinguished.

I know that many of those who considered themselves as Mr. Pitt's friends, and many of those who were in the closest connexion with the D. of P. and with Lord F. were against the late coalition. They will, neither of them, be sorry to see them kept in with humiliation and mortification, or what one set of them will like better, to see them kicked out with disgrace. But their rejoicing will be the grief of a late posterity.

"The child will rue, that is unborn, the hunting of that day."

It is as I expected: Lord F. is not to go to Ireland. The reason, as I hear, for his not going, is that alone for which I should wish him to go at all. It was apprehended that he would make some changes in Ireland. I have seen and conversed with Lord F. upon Ireland; though not at

all about the arrangements of men, not the difficult case which has since occurred, and of which it did not seem to me that Lord F. had the least suspicion. He desired to talk to me, as to a man of some knowledge in the affairs of Ireland, and of great zeal and earnestness that the King's business should go on prosperously in that kingdom, and at this time. I gave him my honest opinions (which you know, as well as he knows them) on that subject. I took the liberty, even before I had seen him, and on the prospect of Hutchinson's death (or instantly after it, I forget which) to caution him against jobbing away the two offices which he held, particularly that of the college. Of this I am sure that, before Hutchinson's death, I wrote to Grattan to exert himself to prevent that seminary of the Church of Ireland from becoming a matter of State accommodation, or private patronage. I wrote to the D. of P. a long letter to the same effect. Even in the first paroxysms of grief, under the heavy hand of God, when Windham's kindness broke in upon me, finding it long before given out, that I was soliciting, and in one paper it being asserted, that I had secured it to myself, I spoke and wrote my mind very fully to him against this radical job, which struck at the rising generation, and poisoned publick principle in its first stamen—and when I heard, that one Dr. Bennet, not content with his Bishoprick, was so greedy and so frantick, at this time, when

the Church labours under so much odium for avarice, as to wish to rob the members of its seminary, men of the first characters in learning and morals, of their legal rights, and by dispensation to grapple to himself, a stranger and wholly unacquainted with the body, its lucrative Provostship, as a Commendam, I wrote to the D. of P. strongly to enforce the idea I expressed to your Lordship in our conversation, and before to him by letter against unstatutable nominations. I considered a dispensation to be to the statutes only as equity to law; and that he the D. of P. had no right by his arbitrary will and pleasure to recommend a violation of the law, and the robbing of other people of their undoubted rights.

LETTER IX.

TO DR. LAURENCE.

WITHOUT A SIGNATURE OR DATE.

DEAR LAURENCE,

TOGETHER with the letter which you sent from Mr. Nagle, we got one to-day from Mrs. Crewe, and taking in the two accounts, I must be sanguine in the hope that he will weather the storm, and in the end get right again.—I trust Dr. Parry understands his disorder, and if the redundancy of bile is the disorder itself, and not the symptom of

something worse, it is not of a nature to make one despair: one knows how alarming the appearances produced by bilious disorders always are, without ending fatally.

I admire your firmness and resolution, and am happy that the national character for justice, wisdom, and foresight in its past conduct, is to be vindicated, though vindicated but by a single man. Impressed with the inconveniences that arise to the party, who gives the most measured reproof by unwelcome admonition, it was my duty to state them, and to convey to you my own feelings on the point in question. Considering that as yet in this Parliament I stand single in adherence to original principles, it certainly is most acceptable to me, to have those principles ably vindicated, and my assertion, that they were original principles, clearly made out: but God forbid, that any justification of my conduct should be made good at the expence of inconvenience to my friend.—I suppose the call of the House will bring Lord Milton to town: I have writ to tell him, that upon his seconding your resolutions will probably depend your getting inserted on the journals a defence of the Nation.—To this pitch of spirit and consistency are we come.

Ever yours.

Tuesday.

LETTER X.

FROM THE DUKE OF PORTLAND TO DR LAURENCE.

London, Friday, 7th Sept. 1798.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I THANK you for your letter and the communications, both which I have put into Lord Spencer's hands. Your anonymous correspondent's hints seem intitled to serious attention and consideration; but as for the Emperor Hezekiah, I confess I am not sanguine enough to fancy, that his acquaintance or christianity will contribute much to stop the paganism, with which it is the object of the French to overwhelm all the nations of the earth.—Your letter was the first intimation I had had of Sir James's * having it in contemplation to retire from the bench; but unless you know the contrary to a certainty, I should very much doubt Sir William's having any intention whatever to fill his station. I understand, and indeed I have understood for some time, that in case of a removal of any sort, there could be no competition in your profession but between you and Dr. Nichol; and I am sure you will believe me, when I tell you, that if you are to withdraw yourself, or rather not to suffer justice to be done to you because you are in Parliament, I suspect you

* Sir James Marriot.

are doing an act of injustice to the person to whom you are obliged for your seat, as well as to yourself and to the publick. It would be idle to promise Dr. Nichol my support, when he has no competitor; and I have too good an opinion of him to think that he would fancy, that it could be possible that I could give it him in any case where you and he have the same object in view.

Sincerely yours ever,

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